

## Submission from Sign Language Interactions

Evidence – Factual – examples of why the BSL Bill is needed

Deaf/Deafblind/Deafened/Hard of Hearing (delete as appropriate)

Narrative

For many decades there have been valiant attempts made by individuals, Deaf organisations and Government departments to improve linguistic access, education and opportunities in employment and society etc, for BSL users living in Scotland. Despite these efforts, Deaf sign language user still face many barriers within all the afore mentioned areas and more.

Although sign language is recognised as an official language, it still does not receive the same status as English or Gaelic.

Most of the discourse and information that is shared and produced in Scotland is not available in BSL and therefore BSL users are excluded from every day information. Until there is legislation passed in the form of a BSL Bill, government agencies and society will not truly have attempted to give equality to Deaf BSL users living in Scotland.

Sign Language Interactions is a national provider of communication services for Deaf people. We supply BSL interpreters to a range of public organisations. There are still many public services who do not supply interpreters or make adequate provision. In addition to the DDA and then the equality act, public organisations require specific legislation to ensure they produce robust plans and allocate resources to increase access to interpreters. A BSL bill would act as powerful lever to ensure this would happen.