

June 2010

To the Honorable _____:

Hello. I am writing to show my support for New Jersey bills S1931 and A2811 to establish a New Jersey Aphasia Study Commission.

Many people with aphasia¹ in New Jersey need access to services in their communities. You will be surprised by how many people you will help by supporting these bills. The estimated population of NJ in 2009 was 8,707,739² and approximately 1 in 250 people have aphasia³. Therefore, the state of New Jersey has roughly 34,830 residents with the language disorder. That large number increases significantly when you consider that aphasia affects not only the person with the disorder, but also everyone he/she communicates with in a given day.

I am asking you to please vote “yes” to establish the Aphasia Study Commission in New Jersey. This is an important first step in determining the impact of aphasia on people individually and the state as a whole. By getting behind this bill, you have the opportunity to help so many of your voting constituents - people directly affected by aphasia and their families, caregivers, neighbors, and friends.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I appreciate your support.

Best regards,

_____, NJ

¹ “Aphasia is a neurological disorder caused by damage to the portions of the brain that are responsible for language. Primary signs of the disorder include difficulty in expressing oneself when speaking, trouble understanding speech, and difficulty with reading and writing. Aphasia is not a disease, but a symptom of brain damage. Most commonly seen in adults who have suffered a stroke, aphasia can also result from a brain tumor, infection, head injury, or dementia that damages the brain.” Definition from the NIH National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, last retrieved on 6/8/10 from: <http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/aphasia/aphasia.htm>

² Statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau, last retrieved on 6/8/10 from: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/34000.html>

³ Statistics from the National Aphasia Association, last retrieved on 6/8/10 from: http://aphasia.org/Aphasia%20Facts/aphasia_faq.html