

COUNTY OF MONTEREY

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

1441 SCHILLING PLACE, SALINAS, CA 93901
(831) 755-5117 ~ Fax (831) 796-8521



DATE: November XX, 2025

TO: [NAME], [ORGANIZATION]

SUBJECT: COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES LETTER OF SUPPORT

Dear [NAME -OR- ORGANIZATION],

The Commission on Disabilities is charged with advising and recommending to the Board of Supervisors regarding equal access to employment, public services, communications, infrastructure, and public accommodations for people with disabilities.

Among the Strategic Goals for the County of Monterey is to enhance and improve County services to ensure an adequate safety net and quality of life for all County residents.

In your federal advocacy and focus, we urge you to remember all those in the County of Monterey who are directly served by federal programs for people with disabilities. These may not flow through the County's Departments or budgets yet are still of critical importance to meeting our mutual goals in serving County residents.

One that often goes unnoticed is the *National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled*, operating out of the Library of Congress since 1931. Services include adaptive talking and electronic books, education and printing on demand in Braille, and a US Currency Reader program allowing meaningful access to independence for the visually impaired. These services, and more, are provided free of charge to any resident of the United States or US Citizen living abroad who is unable to read or use regular print materials.

Supplementing this work at the national level is the *Braille and Talking Books Library* in Sacramento, operated by the California State Library. This hub acts as librarians for all those enrolled in the greater Northern California area, and the State Library adds recordings of California materials, facilitates access to equipment and materials by mail, and offers orientation and training to public libraries so they can facilitate enrollment. This work is greatly enhanced through funding to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, another federal institution that directly supports County residents in need.

All services from the National Library Service, or the Braille and Talking Books Library, are completely free, and can be conducted via telephone or mail, also at no charge to the County resident. The management of materials by mail relies on a third area of unacknowledged federal funding, the *Free Matter to the Blind or Other Physically Handicapped Persons* appropriation from Congress to the US Postal Service. This enables our County residents without connectivity to equally benefit with special equipment and talking books sent and returned for free through the mail.

These federal programs greatly expand library services to all residents of the County who may have visual or print disabilities, well beyond what individual public library budgets or expertise could provide.

We urge you to put these programs in your federal advocacy plans, ensure you are aware of ongoing threats and cuts to them, and directly ask for suitable and adequate ongoing funding to enable County residents with disabilities to continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

[COMMISSIONER NAME]
[COMMISSIONER TITLE]