

February 24, 2008

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My name is Denise D Welch, and I am writing because I support providing training to potential Speech-to-Speech users. I am writing today to ask that this state's application for TRS recertification include a comprehensive plan to train a majority of prospective users to use STS.

Speech-to-Speech has been a relay service that has worked. It has aided an ever increasing number of speech disabled consumers to attain functional equivalency. It has been the best answer to fulfilling the promise of Section 225 of the Communications Act for this population. This act requires that the FCC ensure that both "interstate and intrastate telecommunications relay services are available, to the extent possible, to . . . speech-impaired individuals." Presently, the state appears to be violating the spirit of section 225.

A large proportion of people with speech disabilities cannot advocate for themselves and so, I am doing that. Every speech disabled person has the right to know how to use STS. Please ensure that this state's recertification plan includes adequate funding for a comprehensive statewide training for all potential users.

I have been advocating STS for the past seven years and have seen for myself the difference this very special program makes to the Seniors in my area.

Sincerely,

Denise D. Welch