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April 23, 1959

Congressman John E. Fogarty
House Office Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Congressman Fogarty:

Though this letter is not written in answer to Dr. Elstat's letter, it is stimulated by his communication. Further, I felt that the following information should be in your hands, particularly if a public hearing is held on H.J. Res. 316.

In my experience in testing and reviewing the hearing of many thousands of persons complaining of loss of hearing and/or hearing impairment, I have only seen a very, very few patients that were actually totally deaf from a medical standpoint. Nevertheless, I recognize the fact that manual communication is important in a very small percentage of cases.

Though it is unbelievable, the Manualists apparently resent the fact that progress has been made in developing oral speech in those patients that are considered deaf. Further, they resist all efforts to improve this area. It is apparently their feeling that if one is deaf and cannot communicate naturally and normally by oral speech, he should be sent to an institution where manual communication is taught. On the other hand, it is my feeling that speech, where attainable, is far superior to communication by manualism, and the great percentage of deaf people can attain speech. While we believe that both types of schools are needed, the Manualists believe in only their method. We have encountered this opposition in many and various ways so that it is apparently the feeling of all Manualists.

We continue to put forth great effort to obtain favorable action on your magnificent bill. My kindest personal regards and best wishes are extended to you.

Yours very faithfully,



W. W. Wilkerson, Jr. M. D.