

THE WORST DISABILITY

I have been working with and for people with disabilities since I was a young child. And, that was many, many years ago.

My parents were deaf, so I was their little interpreter.

Many of my relatives were deaf so we attended a special church where sign language was the usual mode of communication.

I have interpreted for the hearing impaired both professionally and as an unpaid volunteer.

My work and community activism often involve me with numerous people with a variety of disabilities.

I spent a several years on this City's Disability Commission (CACOD), as a member and then Chair.

I am a member of the advisory board for the Village in Long Beach.

My organization, Advocates for Disability Rights, has been in existence for a number of years and assists those citizens who need help because of their disabilities (both mental and physical).

In those many years, I have truly found that none are so blind as those who will not see.

None are so deaf as those who refuse to hear.

And, never have I come across a handicap so disabling as a closed mind.

In a democracy, we would hope that all sides of any issue are fully aired and considered.

I truly hope you consider these words in your deliberations today.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Lejins

Advocates for Disability Rights