

## Press Releases

11/17/2016

### **Senator Walaska receives Legislative Award from Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

STATE HOUSE —The Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has presented Sen. William A. Walaska (D-Dist. 30, Warwick), a longtime advocate for the hearing impaired, with its Legislative Award.



“The commissioners recognized you for your long-standing commitment to the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing,” said Executive Director Steven Florio at the agency’s 15<sup>th</sup> annual Coffee Hour event at the State House on Nov. 3. “Your first appointment by Senate Majority Leader Paul Kelly was on March 17, 1997. The commissioners are very appreciative of your continued support for 19 years.”

Senator Walaska has long advocated for the hearing impaired in the legislation he has sponsored over the years. They include legislation to require candidates who accept matching campaign financing to provide captioning for the deaf and hard of hearing on televised ads, legislation creating a seat for the executive director of the Commission on Deaf and Hard of Hearing on the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, legislation to increase medical insurance coverage for hearing aids and to require insurance coverage for surgery and services associated with hearing aid implants, legislation that would track language development in deaf and hearing-impaired students, and legislation that would require movie theaters to provide open captioning for persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing

“I am honored and humbled by this award,” said Senator Walaska. “I have worked very hard over the years on behalf of the hearing-impaired, and I hope I have been able to make a difference in their lives.”

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