

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to DeCoursey French, November 26, 1901

Iowa, drawer 2 Nov. 26, 1901. Mr. DeCoursey French, Dubuque, Iowa. My dear Sir: —

I have just returned to the United States and find your note of October 28th, in relation to a proposed bill by the Iowa Legislature in aid of day schools for the deaf — similar to the Illinois law.

The Illinois bill to which you refer was presented to the Legislature of that state through the influence of the Chicago Association of Parents of Deaf Children; and the Governor of the State, and the Committee of the Legislature having the bill under consideration, hearing of my interest in the deaf, invited me to visit Springfield and express my views upon the subject of the Deaf. This was all the connection I had with the passage of the bill. I have appeared on several occasions before Committees of state legislatures, having under consideration legislation relating to the deaf, but always by invitation of the Committees and of the Governors. In none of these cases have I initiated legislation, or appeared in the interest of any person or persons having the bills in charge. I have not appeared as an advocate for or against these bills, but have simply been invited by the Legislative Committees — as one who has given considerable thought to the subject — to examine pending bills and express an opinion upon them.

In the case of Iowa I could not of course, accept your invitation to appear before the Legislature, but would be inclined to consider favorably an invitation from the Legislative Committee or from the Governor of the State to express my views relating to pending legislation on the subject of the deaf.

Yours sincerely, Alexander Graham Bell

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Nov. 26, 1901. Mr. Jacob Reese, 400 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Penn. My dear Sir: —

Dr. Alexander Graham Bell has just returned to this country and finds your note of October 29 relating to an invention designed to improve the communication between the Deaf and Blind Deaf. He directs me to say that he will be very glad to see your invention and express an opinion upon it if you desire.

Respectfully, Jean Private Secretary.