

Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for the opportunity to address your committee today.

My name is Linda Pouliot, I'm severely hard of hearing, and without the special phone equipment from MTAP, my job and my personal life are both much harder.

I come from a family of 11 children. Five of those are hard of hearing or deaf. Our hearing losses are the result of genetics, and they are progressive – they grow worse with time.

I'm a hairdresser, and at my office right now, my coworkers need to answer the phone for me. They have to interrupt what they're doing – sometimes making it hard to finish their work.

making me a more productive part of the team. With the CapTel, I'll be able to truly work and live independently.

This equipment that MTAP makes possible is a huge benefit to my life, and to all of us in the deaf and hard of hearing community.

It's truly a miracle, and I am 100 percent profoundly grateful for the service.

DAN POWLIOT

I spoke to my brother about this before coming over here, and he played a large role in getting this program started back in the early nineties. He told me that it was only through the cooperation of the governor's office, the legislature, Qwest, and the Montana Deaf and Hard of Hearing Association that this was possible at all. So I would like to say thank you to each one of you. You make

I have a TTY at work now, as well as one at home, and they help a great deal. But of course, most hearing people don't have a TTY of their own, which makes it hard for clients to call me. Of course they can call me through the relay – another very valuable service – but that takes longer, so they prefer to talk to one of my coworkers.

I'm getting a CapTel at work soon – a new kind of phone that specifically helps the hard of hearing. By using a relay and voice recognition technology, it gives me “closed captioning” of the phone conversation – just like on TV.

Once I have that, my co-workers won't have to take all my calls anymore. What's more, I can help answer their calls as well,

In Conclusion - ~~calling~~ ANY TIME AND ANY PLACE
COMMUNICATION w/ FAMILY & FRIENDS
NEW Tech for my workplace
I would not Be the Person I
Am Today!

this possible. Thank you again for the opportunity to express these thoughts to your committee.