



STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Blindness and deafness, taken separately, are extraordinary obstacles, but the loss of both sight *and* hearing creates difficulties that few, if any, able-bodied people can comprehend. Even so, history teaches that with courage, determination, and support, no obstacle is insurmountable. DeafBlind individuals across Texas and beyond must demonstrate extraordinary resilience, and they prove the strength of the human spirit on a daily basis. Their lives and accomplishments, moreover, inspire us to build a more inclusive society, one in which opportunity is not limited by ability status.

Today, as many as 15,000 Texans live with combined hearing and vision loss, a condition that fundamentally impacts communication, education, and daily life. But thanks to assistive technology, education programs, and advocacy, DeafBlind individuals have more opportunities than ever to live independently, pursue careers, and contribute to their communities. From innovative tactile communication methods to advancements in braille displays and mobility aids, we have witnessed a veritable sea change in accessibility, which, in turn, has empowered thousands to achieve their full potential.

Texans have long championed the rights and liberties of individuals with disabilities, and to this day, many state institutions, including the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, stand as templates for the nation. In the private sector, countless organizations seek to remove accessibility barriers and thereby ensure that *everyone* has the chance to succeed.

We know that our lives are *not* defined by our challenges, and few have lived out this notion as vividly as did Helen Keller. Deaf and blind from a young age, she did what was once considered impossible and became an admired thinker and public figure despite her disabilities. With the guidance of her devoted teacher, Anne Sullivan, she shattered expectations, proving to the world that intellect and ambition know no sensory limits. She was a celebrated author, activist, and humanitarian who advocated for disability rights and inspired millions. Helen Keller's legacy lives on today, urging us to expand access, promote education, and ensure that no individual is left behind.

Though much progress has been made, our work is far from finished. Awareness, advocacy, and continued investment remain critical if we are to ensure that DeafBlind people can thrive. To that end, many professionals, families, and volunteers work tirelessly to provide services, foster independence, and raise awareness. Their efforts exemplify some of our state's highest ideals: compassion, perseverance, and an unyielding belief in the dignity of the individual.

Each year, the week in which Helen Keller's birthday falls is set aside in order to shed light on the DeafBlind people in our state and to recognize the educators and advocates who advance their interest. During this observance and hereafter, may we fix our eyes on a stronger, safer Texas in which all citizens can reach for their highest potential. At this time, I encourage all Texans to learn more about the challenges DeafBlind individuals face, to support expanded accessibility, and to reaffirm our commitment to dignity and opportunity for all.

Therefore, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim June 22–28, 2025, to be

DeafBlind Awareness Week



in Texas and urge all Texans to observe the occasion with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto affixed my signature this the 13th day of March, 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott".

Governor of Texas