

# SUPPORTING THE IMPORTANCE OF BRAILLE IN THE LIVES OF BLIND PEOPLE

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SPEECH OF  
HON. DANNY K. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 2010

- Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in supporting the designation of July 2010 as "Braille Literacy Month," and in congratulating the National Federation of the Blind for seventy years of outstanding service. I am delighted that we have this opportunity to reflect on the progress made to services for the blind, and to build on this progress for the future of Braille literacy.

- One-hundred-eighty years ago, the first Braille book was published--an accomplishment that has since allowed for millions of people, who are blind or of low vision, to read, write and communicate. For a person who is blind, Braille has become a basic skill that lies at the center of the continuing efforts for fairness and equal education. The National Federation of the Blind, as both the oldest and largest organization of blind people in the United States, is integral to this continuous fight for equality. For the past several decades, the National Federation of the Blind has advocated strongly for the translation of more books and textbooks into Braille so as to both promote Braille literacy and help integrate blind persons into society. As policymakers, we must support the advancement of equality and knowledge that is imbibed in the actions of the NFB. Declaring July 2010 as "Braille Literacy Month" would be one step, but an important one, in our efforts towards promoting equality and education for all persons in the United States.

- In my hometown of Chicago, there is a nonprofit organization called the Chicago Lighthouse that has provided services and support for the blind for several decades, much like the NFB. Amongst their many accomplishments in education and job training, the Chicago Lighthouse is also responsible for the manufacturing of the many clocks that you see in the U.S. government today--a testament to the skills, talent, and work of the people they serve. Though only one of many achievements, the clocks that you see around you today demonstrate the continuing need to provide equal access to job opportunities and education to those who are blind so as to fulfill their potentials.

In declaring July 2010 as Braille Literacy Month, we would not only be promoting literacy for the blind, but progressing down a road of true equality as well.

