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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Congress Awards NCSA Education Grant

January, 3, 2008 – Bethesda, MD — Thanks to the efforts of Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), the National Cued Speech Association (NCSA) has been approved for a \$175,000 grant under the FY 08 Labor HHS Education Appropriations Act.

The grant allows the NCSA to develop an assessment battery and certification process for teachers, speech language pathologists and other professionals who use Cued Speech, especially with deaf/hard of hearing children. The grant will be administered by the US Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Education.

“As standards for educational professionals have increased over the past few years, the NCSA has been bombarded with requests from district, local and state educational departments for a way to assess the cueing skills of their employees,” said NCSA President Sarina Roffé.

“Teachers of the deaf, speech-language pathologists and other professionals who cue fluently need to prove their skills have been evaluated by a national organization. We need to fill that gap.”

The NCSA expects to work to complete the project over a two-year period with a major university.

The grant approval is the culmination of a 10-month process, whereby members of the NCSA across all 50 states, called and lobbied their U.S. House representatives and senators in support of the appropriations request.

“Our membership was very active in this process of telling their Congressman and Senators personal stories about their use of Cued Speech and how it improved the quality of their lives by providing improved language, communication and literacy,” said NCSA Executive Director Amy Ruberl.

“Rep. Van Hollen, as our representative, stewarded the project through all of the congressional levels to get it approved.”

The NCSA FY 08 Appropriations request was supported by more than 30 house representatives and over a dozen US Senators, including Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA), whose office has worked with the NCSA since FY 05, in pursuing appropriations project approval. The NCSA received a \$325,000 grant from the US Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation in FY 05 to conduct a national training program.

“Cued Speech students are regularly meeting high stakes testing standards and attending major universities. But these students also need professional level service providers and as the national organization representing Cued Speech interests, the NCSA feels a responsibility to ensure that there are standards in place to meet their needs,” said Ms Ruberl.

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The National Cued Speech Association is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that champions effective communication, language development and literacy through the use of Cued Speech. For more information, visit www.cuedspeech.org or call 800. 459.3529.