



From the desk of Chad A. Ludwig

March 20, 2019

Representative Jeff Barker, Chair
House Committee on Business and Labor
900 Court St. NE, H-480
Salem, OR 97301

RE: House Bill 3205

To the House Committee on Business and Labor,

My name is Chad A. Ludwig, and I am writing this letter as a private citizen. I want to disclose that I also work as Interim Director of the Regional Resource Center on Deafness at Western Oregon University and as Executive Director for Bridges Oregon, Inc., an unpaid position. I am involved in multiple activities in the community, such as the Legislative Committee at the Oregon Association of the Deaf and numerous other advisory committees, work groups, and projects. This letter is my personal testimony.

I regret I am unable to be present during the public hearing and possible work session hearing due to my work responsibilities.

Please support HB 3205!

We need Communication Facilitators. A Communication Facilitator, or CF, is a skilled signer who facilitates the use of telecommunication technologies by DeafBlind individuals or persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing with one or more physical disabilities that limit expressive communication to callers through modern telecommunication technologies.

There are over 350 DeafBlind individuals in the State of Oregon, and many of them do not have the autonomy to make telephone calls on their own. This population needs additional resources to elevate their autonomy to make telephone calls.

I beseech the legislators to adopt the following amendments to the bill:

Page 1

On page 1, delete lines 17 – 20 and insert:



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(5) “Communication facilitator” means a person who provides professional, in-person assistive services to persons who are deaf-blind and to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing with a physical disability that limits expressive communication when such assistance is necessary for the person to communicate effectively via a telecommunications device, with or without the use of an assistive telecommunication device or a telecommunications relay service.

Page 2

I also suggest the following changes for your consideration.

On page 2, line 38: delete “**provides**” and insert “**may provide**”.

Page 3

On page 3, delete lines 23-24, and insert:

(b) Provide communication facilitator services to persons who are deaf-blind when such assistance is necessary.

On page 3, delete lines 36-37, and insert:

(c) The provision of communication facilitator services; and

On page 3, line 41, insert “**in the provision of communication facilitator services and**” as follows.

The commission may contract with any governmental agency, or other entity the commission considers to be qualified, to assist the commission **in the provision of communication facilitator services and** in the administration of ORS 759.693 to 759.698.

I strongly urge you to vote a do-pass recommendation on HB 3205.

Sincerely,



Chad A. Ludwig, MSW, ADAC, DI