

To: Chair Salinas, Vice-chairs Hayden and Nosse and member of the committee

RE: Support for HB 4115

My name is Amanda Wheeler-Kay. I am a freelance Community/Health Care Interpreter.

Last year my colleagues and I testified to the fact that as freelance interpreters we are marginalized from decisions that directly impact our working conditions, standards of practice, training opportunities, and the ability to prepare adequately for assignments.

We come to you again seeking your support for HB 4115 as we continue to advocate for ourselves and the individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) with whom we work.

HB 4115 is a pro-interpreter bill, the first in which working interpreters have had the opportunity to make suggestions about concrete ways in which legislation could be written and re-written to impact our work and livelihoods. It was informed by the interpreters who have submitted testimony before you, and by many others including those who participated anonymously in the 2018 “Working Voices” summary report. I encourage you to read it to hear directly from interpreters about barriers, attitudes, cultural issues, and specific problems affecting their work. It includes key recommendations to address “systemic failures that create less-than-ideal working conditions and limit compensation for interpreters, as well as hamper meaningful language access services in Oregon.”

Thank you for your time. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further or to answer any questions.

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