

Esteemed Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Felicity Ratway. I have been a health care interpreter in Oregon since 2015. I have a Master's degree in Interpreting and Translation Studies, I am certified through OHA and NBCMI as a Spanish interpreter.

While I don't sign well enough to interpret between ASL and English, I know how great of an impact lack of access can have on the Deaf community.

I am writing to urge your support of HB 3231 because this bill would allow for the enforcement of existing law protecting Oregonians' right to access credentialed interpreters in the medical, legal, and educational settings.

Oregonians who communicate through signed languages deserve the same access to important services as those who communicate through spoken languages. They have the right to equal access under the ADA, ORS 413.552, and other existing legislation, but too often are served by interpreters who have not demonstrated competency. Oregon has already set standards for competency for sign language interpreters. This bill would ensure that interpreters in Oregon meet those standards to work in the field, improving the quality of language access services.

Best,

Felicity Ratway