

I want to add that I'm Deaf, and I've worked/lived in a city for 20 years where I'd guess that the majority of ASL Interpreters aren't certified (which I suspect will be one pathway to licensure, even though I've not seen a proposal as such). Some have been good, some have been bad. A quick look at who's providing testimony again tells me the Deaf community wasn't involved in the process - as someone who's involved in the community, I can say that I only knew about it the month ORID was ready to bring the proposal to the Legislature. Another concern is that unless ALL interpreters are licensed under OHA, linking ASL licensure to OHA again perpetuates the belief that being Deaf is a medical condition vs a linguistic minority. In Oregon, there are several academic programs offering ASL, yet I'm not seeing many of those (Deaf academicians) providing supporting testimony. And finally, I want to reiterate that YES, I and every other Deaf person wants and deserves qualified ASL Interpreters. But this Bill, if passed as written, I fear may cause more harm than good to the Deaf community.