

**TESTIMONY ON SB 1562
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND BUSINESS
FEBRUARY 8, 2022**

**PRESENTED BY: ERIN M. PETTIGREW, ACCESS TO JUSTICE COUNSEL FOR
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Good Morning, Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Erin Pettigrew with the Office of Legislative Affairs for the Oregon Judicial Department. On behalf of Chief Justice Martha Walters and the Oregon Judicial Department (OJD), I am pleased to express support of SB 1562 as introduced.

SB 1562 creates a licensure program for sign language interpreters. We recognize and support the proponents' goal of ensuring that Oregonians are receiving high-quality interpretation services from credentialed interpreters who are trained to meet community need in several settings. Excellence in interpretation serves Oregon's Deaf and hard-of-hearing communities and our state.

Under ORS 45.291, OJD's Court Language Access Services (CLAS) program currently certifies and publishes a roster of Oregon Court Certified interpreters, including sign language interpreters. OJD offers this unique program to meet the dynamic needs of Oregon's state courts and the diverse individuals we serve. Competence in interpretation paired with flexibility to engage in services is tremendously important to allow courts to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other federal and state statutes and constitutional requirements. We are very grateful to the proponents for working with OJD to make sure that these this new licensure program and OJD's sign language interpreter program can exist side by side.

We appreciate Speaker Rayfield, Senator Anderson, Senator Hansell, and the community leaders who brought this forward. I am happy to answer any questions.