

Rep. Rob Nosse
House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

January 27, 2023

SUBJECT: Support for HB 2696, the Oregon Sign Language Interpreter Licensure Bill

To the Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Goodwin, Vice-Chair Nelson, and members of the Committee:

I am writing to urge this Committee to support HB 2696.

My name is Audrey Ramirez-Loudenback and I am a Sign Language interpreter that is writing to urge the Committee's support of HB2696.

Throughout my 12 years of professional interpreting experience in the state of Oregon I have seen that our community needs a way to standardize interpreting services so there is a consistent minimum quality of interpreting provided for the communities we live and work within. Too many agencies are operating in a way that is putting everyone at risk by hiring Sign Language Interpreters that are not qualified in medical, legal, educational, and community settings. Oftentimes the consequences for providing sub-par interpreting services are most severe on the Deaf and hard of hearing people we are trying to serve.

As a professional and practicing interpreter I feel strongly that we need state licensure as a way to provide some accountability for organizations and individuals that are taking advantage of our communities by not providing quality interpreter services. I hope you can realize that establishing this licensure process will benefit all those who depend on interpreting services as well as those of us that are working in this field and believe minimum standards are needed to uphold our own professional integrity.

Thank you for your consideration.

- Audrey Ramirez-Loudenback

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