



Oregon Legislature
Senate Committee on Human Services
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

February 5, 2023

SUBJECT: SB 569 • Requires to closed captioning on televisions in places of public accommodation.

To the Chair Sen. Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Sen. Robinson, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services.

Hello! This letter is intended to provide public education and increase awareness of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Oregonians. For so many years, this language and culturally marginalized group have been denied access to information, goods, and services in the State of Oregon. The final report in 2016 of the [Community-based Needs Assessment \(CNA\) of Oregon's Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#) communities conducted by the Research & Resource Center on Deaf communities at Western Oregon University as this was funded by the 2015 Oregon Legislature, we were able to learn countless challenges and barriers. Despite the assessment's findings, legislators did not pass proposed legislation in 2017 that would have met critical community needs, prompting the establishment of Bridges Oregon.

Bridges Oregon, Inc. is a nonprofit organization serving Oregonians who are Deaf, DeafBlind, or Hard of Hearing or face other communication barriers. It is in our mission to facilitate equity and inclusiveness and to provide a bridge to opportunities through advocacy, education and communication.

Some examples of data from the CNA report on Captioning:

- “The common theme of accommodations arose several times among focus groups. A hard of hearing female summarized, “*CART** [or other caption services] *not only eases the burden of those for people like myself, it allows us to recruit more people who have hearing loss into the field. In fact we find foreign visitors or attendees whose mother tongue is not English are actually using the CART [or other caption services] system because they gain a lot out of it too. If it's good for a particular disability population, it's actually good for everybody, not just that one particular population. So the complaint is it's too expensive or too difficult. I think people [running businesses] are not aware of the positive impact of making these particular accommodations. And I think the legislature*



needs to understand the positive impact that is far beyond the community in question, it will have an impact.” (pp. 27, CNA report).

*CART: Captioning Access Real Time

I beseech you to recognize the need in implement a captioning access for everyone as they are culturally specific and linguistically marginalized population in our state. Please vote yes to SB 569.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chad A. Ludwig". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Chad A. Ludwig, MSW, ADAC, OHCI, CDI
Executive Director