

Submitter: Victoria Guillen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB584

The Honorable Rev. Dr. Deb Patterson
Chair, Oregon State Senate Committee on Health Care

The Honorable Cedric Hayden
Vice Chair, Oregon State Senate Committee of Health Care

Dear Senator Patterson and Senator Hayden,

My name is Victoria Guillen and I am Oregon-based healthcare interpreter in Spanish. I write to oppose Oregon Senate Bill 584. This would require the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to develop a web-based platform to support the scheduling and payment of interpreters for language access for Oregonian health care patients. I oppose this bill because it threatens to make my life as an independent contractor more difficult.

Nationally more than 80% of interpreters and translators work as Independent Contractors (ICs). As IC, I set my hours. I can accept and refuse assignments according to my schedule. This is enormous advantage to those who have child or eldercare responsibilities, for example. I set my rates and I can negotiate rates with my clients. For each of the companies I work with, I have to demonstrate my skills and qualifications including taking their test, which in many cases are harder than the National certification test offered in health care by CCHI and MIA. I have my Health Care Interpreter Certification from Washington State. I love to work from home. I help patients over the phone with 911 calls, ER, Urgent Care, medical visits, pharmacy, crisis line, financial department and many providers and patients make calls over the phone, all this is very difficult to schedule.

Having the Oregon Health Authority replace the many language companies working in Oregon will make my life more challenging instead of being on the "rodolex" of several companies, which makes it possible to fill my schedule out. I will be dependent on one client to provide assignments in Oregon. The bill also does not clarify how rates will be set, or who sets them.

Language access in health care in Oregon could be improved, but this bill isn't the way to do it.

Respectfully

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