

Submitter: Anndee Glidden  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB584

Dear Senator Patterson and Senator Hayden,

On behalf of remote interpreters providing language access to the limited English proficient and Deaf and hard of hearing patients of Oregon, I beg you to oppose Bill 584.

I have been a professional (both qualified and nationally certified) interpreter for over 22 years. I have worked directly with interpreters in Oregon and across the United States. A professional interpreter is capable of providing communicative autonomy regardless of physical location. I work for a language provider who, contrary to the erroneous claims of a few, has been an excellent employer. I have fair wages, benefits, ergonomic and safe working conditions, professional development opportunities and a sense of pride and camaraderie with my colleagues in doing work that matters.

Not all interpreters want to be onsite independent contractors, not all LEP or Deaf or Hard of Hearing patients want local onsite interpreters who are in their social circles (loss of privacy) and not all who live in rural areas have access to local interpreters in their languages. It is naïve to think a small group of Spanish interpreters can cover the entire state of Oregon's immense language access needs. Remote interpreters are vital to ensuring that all citizens of this country and the state of Oregon have immediate communication access to their healthcare encounters (many that are unplanned).

Please also consider the consequences of such a bill given the recent pandemic and limitations of onsite services that impacted the world. Including such an amendment to this bill is irresponsible, shortsighted and a disservice to your citizens.

There are millions of remote sessions that take place each year in Oregon; 24/7, and it is a well-oiled machine, it requires all of the language companies, and thousands of qualified medical interpreters to meet that need and our LEP citizens deserve us to continue progressing this immediate access process, not rolling back to a less efficient, cumbersome proposed system that only benefits a few.

Because I care deeply about the linguistically and culturally diverse communities across Oregon and our country, and want to ensure they continue to have full agency in their healthcare encounters, I strongly oppose this bill and its's amendments.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,  
Anndee Glidden