



Chad A Ludwig &lt;chad@bridgesoregon.org&gt;

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**SB: 685 - Communication Facilitator**

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**Chad A Ludwig** <Chad@bridgesoregon.org>

Wed, Apr 26, 2023 at 2:19 PM

To: Rep Reynolds <Rep.LisaReynolds@oregonlegislature.gov>, Rep Nguyen H <rep.hoanguyen@oregonlegislature.gov>, Rep Scharf <Rep.AnnaScharf@oregonlegislature.gov>, rep.tracycramer@oregonlegislature.gov, Rep.TravisNelson@oregonlegislature.gov, Rep Neron <Rep.CourtneyNeron@oregonlegislature.gov>, Rep.TomAndersen@oregonlegislature.gov, Rep.LucettaElmer@oregonlegislature.gov, Rep.AnnessaHartman@oregonlegislature.gov, Rep.JamesHieb@oregonlegislature.gov  
Cc: Sen Manning <Sen.JamesManning@oregonlegislature.gov>, sen.cedrichayden@oregonlegislature.gov, FREEMAN Robin <robin.freeman@state.or.us>

To the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services

Oregon Public Utilities Commission (OPUC) focuses only on providing accommodation for telecommunication and nothing else. The Communication Facilitator (CF) is to provide additional support to DeafBlind and Deaf with additional disabilities using the relay services. OPUC has a dedicated [website](#) on relay services to ensure that the public is aware of their relay options.

Bridges Oregon is only one linguistically and culturally specific nonprofit organization in the state to provide service to Oregonians who are Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing. It is in our mission to facilitate equity and inclusiveness and to provide a bridge to opportunities through advocacy, education, and communication.

Communication Facilitators (CFs) provide DeafBlind Oregonians, who communicate using American Sign Language through tactile or close vision methods, with access to make and receive video to video and Video Relay Service calls.

CFs also provide support to Oregonians who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing with a mobility disability in their arms or hands that affects their expressive communication. When a person on the video screen is unable to understand as a result, the CF uses their receptive skills to relay or convey the Deaf or Hard of Hearing person's message.

The service is for those with a mobility disability in their arms or hands that affects their expressive communication and the nature of the disabilities listed can affect expressive communication.

- Ataxia
- Amputee
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS)
- Cerebral Palsy
- Duypuytren's Disease
- Ganglion Cysts
- Motor Neuron Disease(s)
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Parkinson Disease
- Peripheral Neuropathy
- Paralysis
- Rheumatoid arthritis e.g., hands.
- Stroke
- Trigger Finger(s)
- Others relating health or medical condition(s) that may cause the mobility disability in their arms or hands that affects their expressive communication.

**Additional materials are available**

Video example of our CF service: <https://youtu.be/W3cGbT56mnY>

To learn about the CF program: <https://bridgesoregon.org/cf/>

Oregon Relay Service: <https://www.oregonrelay.com/>

OPUC program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing: <https://rspf.puc.state.or.us>

FCC on Relay Services: <https://www.fcc.gov/trs> and <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/telecommunications-relay-service-trs>

Please support the bill **WITHOUT** -1 amendment.

Thank you for your time  
-Chad

*My native language is American Sign Language. While I am bilingual, you may notice English translation errors. Contact me if you have any questions or need clarification.*

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

*While ASL pronouns are gender-neutral, in English, please refer to he/him/his*

**Executive Director**

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