

To: Senate Committee on Health Care
From: Patrick Kagwima, Oregon Interpreters in Action
Re: Support for Statewide Health Care Interpreter Portal

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and members of the Committee,

My name is Patrick Kagwima, and I am a Swahili interpreter. I wanted to do health care interpretation especially because I know that people need this service for their health and wellbeing. Not being able to speak English impacts the level of care people get.

Although it is satisfying to be able to help people, it is tough to do the work long term because of the low pay. I have to work two jobs because I cannot make a living doing only health care interpreting.

I have to maintain my certification if I want to give my clients the best care possible, but I am so busy working two jobs that it's hard to make time to do that. And it costs money.

If we had a payment and scheduling system run by the state, interpreters could make enough to only work one job and still provide services to people who really need it.