

Submitter: David Gutierrez  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB1578

Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden, and members of the Senate Healthcare Committee,

My name is David G. I am a health care interpreter in Oregon, and I'm writing to urge you to vote yes on SB 1578.

As an interpreter, I work elbow-to-elbow with medical providers in exam rooms, ERs, Cardiology, Chemotherapy, the delivery room, and Hospice Care to provide critical resources to Oregonians. I also work with other essential providers and clients to ensure those who don't yet understand or speak English are heard.

However, I struggle to stay in the interpreting industry due to low pay, difficulties renewing costly interpreter certifications, lack of accountability, and lack of health insurance while providing such essential services to our community. SB 1578 would help us address these issues.

SB 1578 will be a meaningful step in improving working conditions for hundreds of health care interpreters like myself. This bill will create a scheduling and payment system that reduces State spending on third-party scheduling companies while allowing interpreters to earn living wages. Interpreters will be able to invest in ongoing training and certification to provide greater access to quality healthcare to the state's most vulnerable population. Thus, the quality of language access services and health outcomes for Medicaid/OHP patients improve.

We urge you to please vote yes on SB 1578 and support the hundreds of health care interpreters like myself provide for our families and communities.

Thank your consideration.