

Submitter: Rather not Say Rather not Say  
On Behalf Of: Linguava  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB1578

I am writing to express my opposition to SB1578.

the State of Oregon would be taking on the federal liability for providing language access.

What the bill does:

Requires the state to either create or purchase a scheduling portal for certified/qualified health care interpreters. The portal must be capable of scheduling functions and payments  
Requires the state to outsource the management of the portal to a 'non-profit' with some very specific qualifications  
Does not require anyone to use the portal

Our concerns:

First and foremost, the portal will limit language access for LEP patients.

The portal does not put the concerns of LEP patients first.

The portal is not good for health care providers because it handicaps their ability to find "on demand" remote interpreter services (the vast majority of interpreter services are provided remotely, not in person)  
The number of languages represented in the current OHA registry is a fraction of the languages served by remote interpreting (130 or more). There are no "certified/qualified" interpreters in many foreign languages.

The portal would be a roadblock to finding needed interpreters.

The bill is violative of an LEP patient's federal civil rights as it limits the ability access qualified interpreter services.

The state is being asked to fund a health care portal that is voluntary and that will not be useful or used.

The management of the portal will be outsourced to a non-profit with no requirement for experience or competence in running such a system. SB 1578 is the first step in creating a state-run interpreter scheduling platform. In doing so, the State of Oregon would be taking on the federal liability for providing language access.

Thank you,