

Submitter: Patrick Galasso
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB950
Subject: Please Support SB 950 – Strengthening Sign Language Interpreter
Licensure

Dear Senator Dick Anderson

I'm reaching out to ask for your support of SB 950. This bill clarifies and streamlines the licensure law for sign language interpreters in Oregon, originally created during the 2023 session. The rule-making process has revealed unintended redundancies, gaps, and confusion within the current statute—issues that directly impact both interpreters and the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing communities. One critical gap is the lack of a clear on-ramping process for new interpreters, making it harder for skilled professionals to enter the field.

As someone who shares a personal connection—e.g., relies on interpreters, has family members affected, or works in the field, I've seen firsthand how the current law is creating unnecessary barriers. Instead of ensuring access to qualified interpreters, it is making the process more difficult and, in some cases, limiting access to essential communication services. This has real consequences for individuals who depend on interpreters for education, healthcare, and daily life.

The goal of licensure is to protect the rights of Oregon's Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing residents. However, as written, the law is undermining that very goal. The amendments in SB 950 will fix these issues and allow us to move forward with a system that works.

I respectfully urge you to support SB 950. It will save time, money, and confusion for both the state and interpreters while ensuring that we can effectively protect and serve the rights of all Oregonians who rely on sign language access.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Galasso

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Qualified Mental Health Interpreter

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Land Acknowledgement:

neotsu oregon

Neotsu "lake by the ocean" is on the ancestral homelands of the Siletz, and Nestucca people and on the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary home of the members of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz. To learn about your location: <https://native-land.ca>