

Mar 11, 2025

The Honorable Mike McLane
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support the Oregon Sign Language Interpreter Licensure Bill

Dear Senator McLane:

My name is Kaitlyn Oldham and I am a Sign Language interpreter who resides in your district.

I'm writing to ask you to support SB950. This bill clarifies and streamlines the licensure law that was created during the 2023 session for sign language interpreters in Oregon. The rule-making process has highlighted areas where the statute created redundancies and confusion, and others that left critical gaps, such as an on-ramping process for new interpreters entering the field. The goal of licensure is to protect the rights of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Oregonians, but as written it is derailing that goal and causing harm. The amendments put forth in SB 950 will get us back on track.

Where I live in Oregon, we have a very small pool of working interpreters. Most of us work in the K-12 education realm, with only a few of us able to work in medical, mental health, and post-secondary settings. As it stands now, SB 950 would help reduce barriers to ensure that our K-12 interpreters can continue to grow and develop in order to best serve the Deaf and hard of hearing population in Central Oregon without exorbitant costs and license limitations.

I respectfully ask you to support the Oregon Sign Language Interpreter Licensure Amendment Bill (SB 950) to save time, money, and confusion for the state and for interpreters to improve our ability to protect and serve the rights of Oregon's Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing citizens.

Sincerely,
Kaitlyn Oldham
346 Hood Ave
Metolius, OR 97741