

March, 11 2025

The Honorable Senator Patterson  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support the Oregon Sign Language Interpreter Licensure Bill

Dear Senator Deb Patterson,

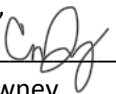
My name is Carol Downey, and I am an American Sign Language interpreter who resides in your district in West Salem.

I'm writing today to ask you to support SB 950. 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 help get us back on track.

I have been a sign language interpreter in Oregon for almost 10 years. The need for interpreter licensing is vital and necessary for our community, but it needs to be done in the right way. If not, we are doing a huge disservice to the Deaf community here in Oregon, and they should not be the ones bearing the brunt of poorly written and quickly passed laws. I am hoping to see even more changes to our licensing requirements, one that prioritizes supporting new interpreters and the Deaf community at its core, but SB 950 is a great first step to remedying that.

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,

  
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Carol Downey

1774 Chukar Ct NW  
Salem, OR, 97304