

3/12/2025

Dear Oregon Legislators,

My name is Kara DeGiovanni, and I am a sign language interpreter who lives and works in the Portland metro area. I'm writing to ask you to support SB950. This bill streamlines the licensing process that was outlined in HB 2696, the sign language interpreter licensure law that was passed during the 2023 session.

The amendments put forth in SB 950 streamline the administrative process for the Health Licensing Office (HLO), eliminate redundancies with co-existing state credentialing requirements, provide student and entry level interpreters with support they need, and reduce out of pocket costs for interpreters.

As a freelancer under the current HB2696, I would need three licenses: Generalist, Medical, and Educational. These are *in addition* to the medical and educational credentials state already requires.

SB 950 amends the current law such that any interpreter would be required to carry just one license. If we don't pass SB 950, the cost of maintaining multiple licenses to be renewed every year will simply eliminate valuable, skilled interpreters from the workforce. This is especially so for interpreters from marginalized communities, rural interpreters, Deaf interpreters, and the large body of interpreters who simply choose to work part-time.

If SB 950 passes, current state laws that already require medical, educational, and legal credentials (unrelated to licensure) would remain the same, so Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Oregonians would lose no protections or quality of service.

SB 950 also requires students and entry level interpreters to practice under the supervision of a state-licensed interpreter, further ensuring quality services for ASL users across the state.

For these reasons, as well as the many found in testimonies submitted by my colleagues and community members, I ask you to support the Oregon Sign Language Interpreter Licensure Amendment Bill (SB 950) to save time, money, and confusion for all stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Kara DeGiovanni
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