

Submitter: Jackie G Matthews
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB950
March 13, 2025

The Honorables
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support the Oregon Sign Language Interpreter Licensure Bill

Dear (Senator/Representative):

My name is Jackie G Matthews 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.

I moved to the Coos Bay Area seven years ago, semi retiring after working for thirty plus years in the greater Seattle area. I have kept up my national certification to provide interpreting services here on the Oregon Coast. The current fees associated with licensure would make it impossible for me to continue providing services in these rural communities.

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,
Jackie G Matthews
982 S. 4th Street

Coos Bay, OR 97420