

DATE: April 14, 2025

TO: Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, and Vice Co-Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis  
Joint Committee on Transportation

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Vice Co-Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis, and members of the committee:

My name is Victor R Mondragon, and I am a Community Member, representing Hood River County I'm writing to respectfully request your support for HB 2990, which intends to improve language access for Oregon's driver's license written tests.

This bill directs the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to revise the written test for Class C driver license applicants to make it more accessible and easier to understand—particularly for individuals who do not speak English as their primary language. Under this legislation, ODOT must submit a progress report to the Joint Committee on Transportation by September 15, 2026. The report will outline efforts to translate the test into multiple languages, improve readability, establish a timeline for the revised test, and detail the translation process, including attention to dialects and the qualifications of translators involved.

A driver's license is more than just a piece of identification, it's a key to opportunity. It provides access to jobs, health care, education, and other essential services, especially in rural and underserved areas where public transportation may be limited or unavailable. It also plays a critical role in supporting local economies by enabling individuals to participate in the workforce and engage in their communities.

My experience was fair, but there were too many exams that I had to take to end up eventually obtaining the driver's license. I failed my 1<sup>st</sup> driver test exam, and I had to come back the following day and I had no one to take me for the 2<sup>nd</sup> exam due to parents being unavailable.

The questions were asked in a way, designed to fail the exam, words were too complex to understand and some response options were repeated from previous questions. This makes the test taker question if they already answered the same question or not.

It is important to have a driver license, especially in a rural community because there is not other reliable public transportation to take you to everyday locations such as a doctor's appointment, before, during and after school activities, grocery store and emergencies.

Buses have schedules and do not match family schedules. I do not qualify for medical transportation. Ambulances would create financial hardship.

Ensuring that all people in Oregon have a fair opportunity to obtain a driver's license, regardless of the language they speak, is vital to building strong, thriving communities. When people can access the licensing process, they're better equipped to pursue

opportunities that support their health, well-being, and long-term success—and they are also better able to contribute to the economic and social vitality of their communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony, and for your consideration of HB 2990.

Victor Mondragon

Community Member

Hood River County