



Testimony in Support of HB 2990

March 15, 2025

Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Vice-Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lesly Muñoz, and I am honored to serve as the State Representative for House District 22, Woodburn, Gervais, Brooks, and North Salem.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2990-2.

For several months, advocates across our communities and the Department of Motor Vehicles, have met to find a solution to address this critical barrier that thousands of Oregonians are facing. The –2 amendment is a product of our ongoing work.

You have heard that the fail rate for test takers who speak a language other than English is much higher than those who speak English as a first language.

We found that this is not due to personal ability but rather lack of consistency in translation between Department of Motor Vehicles' documents and translations not in plain language. Currently, DMV has each document translated through a work order process that can lead to different translations based on translator dialects. Several DMV employees then check the translation for plain language and accuracy. However, the same employee may not be checking corresponding documents. Additionally, these employees may not have expertise in plain language standards.

These inconsistencies lead to the manual language not matching the test language making it harder for Oregonians who speak languages other than English to be less prepared for taking their knowledge test.

HB 2990–2 addresses this issue by establishing the Office of Language Translation within the Department of Transportation that will contract with just one translation service. They would translate all written materials written to the public in the five most commonly spoken languages in the state by people with limited English proficiency. To ensure consistency in language translations within translated materials, the office will also consult with community members and language experts to ensure that these translations are correct, consistent and are in plain language.

The HB 2990–2 would also establish a grant program for traffic safety education courses in languages other than English. We believe this grant program will help increase the number of licensed Oregonians from communities who speak different languages. By investing in equitable access to driver education courses, Oregon will improve safety on our roads and address barriers that lead to disproportionate levels of pass/fail rates.

LESLEY MUÑOZ
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
HOUSE DISTRICT 22



HB 2990–2 would also require the Department of Transportation to report to the legislature on the progress to implement, efforts to engage community-based organizations, and current pass rates broken down by languages and grants awarded to provide traffic safety education courses. This helps measure our progress and ensures that we are following through with our intention of the bill.

We are in conversations with Representative Nelson, the DMV, and the community on an amendment to address small changes that have been brought up.

The ability to drive legally continues to be a core everyday need for Oregonians across our state. It provides access to get to and from work, drive our kids to school, go to healthcare appointments and other essential needs. It's even more critical for people living in rural and underserved communities where there is little to no available public transportation. This bill aims to provide a fair opportunity for all Oregonians to obtain a driver's license. I urge your support for HB 2990.

Thank you,

Lesley Muñoz
State Representative
House District 22