

Dear Co-Chairs, Vice Co-Chairs and Members of the Joint Committee,

My name is Tabitha Joaquin, and I live in Eugene, Oregon. I am writing to express my strong support for HB 2976, the Indigenous Language Justice bill. This important legislation addresses a critical need in our communities by ensuring that Indigenous languages spoken in Oregon can access qualified interpreters.

Every individual deserves the right to understand and be understood, particularly in vital settings such as hospitals, courts, schools, and public offices. Language barriers can lead to misunderstandings, miscommunication, and even discrimination, which disproportionately affects Indigenous peoples. By prioritizing this bill, we can create a more equitable environment for all Oregonians.

HB 2976 will help ensure that people across Oregon have equal access to language interpretation services. This not only fosters inclusivity but also strengthens our community by allowing Indigenous speakers to fully participate in society. By removing language barriers, we are promoting justice and respect for all cultures in our state.

I urge you to prioritize HB 2976 and support the rights of Indigenous language speakers. Together, we can build a more just and inclusive community for everyone.

Thank you for considering this vital legislation.

Sincerely,
Tabitha Joaquin,
(Eugene, Lane County)