

My name is Alee' Robbins and I live in Salem. I have worked as a certified court interpreter and trainer since 1978. I have state and federal court certifications.

~~For 22 years, I worked in San Diego interpreting in state and federal courts, and doing interpreter training across the country. In the summer of 2000 my husband and I moved to Salem, Oregon where I was hired to supervise, mentor and train interpreters, both staff and freelancers for the Oregon Judicial Department. I taught workshops and intensive skills building classes to interpreters of all languages, taking me to the four corners of my newly adopted state. Not only did many interpreters get certified between 2000 and 2003, but all interpreters gained more clarity regarding ethics and protocol. Court interpreters took on the mantle of professionalism, and it showed.~~

But, I missed the challenge of court interpreting, so in February of 2003 I went back to freelancing.

~~For ten years I have interpreted for government, judicial, educational and private entities. For the Oregon State Courts, however, I work very little. The reason is simple. **There is a high demand for freelance interpreters between 8:30-10:30 am, and between 1-3 pm; the very hours most court cases are scheduled.** It would be counter-productive to accept two hours at \$32.50, since during the same hours I bill private clients \$80 an hour, with a three-hour minimum. For federal work I bill roughly \$200 half day/\$400 for full, plus travel time and mileage. I do accept some work at \$32.50 an hour, but only on days and times that are flexible with my own schedule; non-peak hours, mainly.~~

~~Oregon circuit courts are losing interpreters because of this rate disparity. The hourly rate set in 1995 is no longer competitive, especially during hours of highest demand. We are losing interpreters to a number of other jurisdictions. Some freelance interpreters have even managed to negotiate better rates with justice and municipal courts in Oregon. **An interpreter can now make more money interpreting in traffic court than when interpreting for a Measure 11 murder case.** This is a travesty.~~

~~**Spoken language court interpreters have been denied every COLA adjustment requested by the courts since 1995.** That's why we're here today. We respectfully ask that the committee approve a raise to the fair market rate of \$50 an hour, the same rate paid to our Washington colleagues just across the Columbia River, and competitive with other state and federal agencies. Registered interpreter rates should be raised to \$38 an hour, also with a two-hour minimum. Finally, we ask that interpreter rates for both certified and registered interpreters be indexed to inflation.~~

Thank-you for your time,

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