

SB 610-1  
March 28, 2013  
Testimony of Marcia Ohlemiller  
Legal Policy Advisor  
Bureau of Labor and Industries

The Bureau has enforcement jurisdiction over disability discrimination in employment, housing, places of public accommodation and state government programs and services.

One of our concerns about SB 610 was that it should not narrow the definition of "assistance animal" to dogs only, for purposes of employment and housing law. The Bureau has contracts with EEOC and HUD to co-enforce federal and state law in those areas and the laws need to remain consistent. There is no restriction on what type of animal can be an assistance animal under those laws. The -1 amendments appear to be drafted to limit the narrow definition, which includes dogs and any other animal designated in rulemaking, to places of public accommodation and state government.

SB 610-1 would provide protections to trainee assistance animals and their trainers with respect to being allowed in places of public accommodation and state government programs and services. The Bureau supports these protections.

At this time, all of the Bureau's concerns have been met. We thank the sponsors and legislative counsel for their work on this bill.