

February 27, 2015

Senator Sara Gelser, Chair
Senate Committee on Health Care and Early Childhood
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Sara Gelser,

I support the passage of Senate Bill 449. The State of Oregon suffers from a chronic need for provision of access to communication, advocacy, and educational and employment services to Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing individuals. These services would make the lives of this population functionally equivalent to that of the rest of Oregon's citizens. Currently Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing individuals are disadvantaged by structural barriers that SB 449 would begin to remove.

Supporting SB 449 is an opportunity for Oregon's leadership to empower Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing by granting access to the functionally equivalent services that they deserve.

Sincerely,
Erin Neff-Minyard

cc: Oregon Association of the Deaf, Inc.