



March 9, 2015

The Hon. Sara Gelser,
Chairwoman before the Senate Committee
on Health Care and Early Childhood
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Gelser,

I would like to take the opportunity to write to you in support of Senate Bill 449, legislation introduced by Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson. This bill requires the Department of Human Service (DHS) provide a permanent Office for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing Services (ODDBHH) in Oregon.

Currently, DHS is not required or properly funded to provide services for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing Oregonians, even if it is recommended by its own advisory committee. We believe Oregon should join the 38 other states in the Union with agencies that are funded and required to provide services for the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing in our community.

My company, Strada Communication, Inc. works directly with the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing all over the United States and Canada. I have experience working directly with other states, and would encourage Oregon to review other state models of providing communication access services to those who need it. It is vital that these services be properly funded and provided with the knowledge and cultural sensitivity required to ensure individuals the opportunity to participate fully and equally in our community without prejudice or barrier.

I believe that supporting SB 449 will have a positive impact on the lives of countless Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing Oregonians. I thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely

Chanel Carlscio
CEO

CC: Steven Brown, Oregon Association for the Deaf, Legislative Committee Chair
Chad Ludwig, Oregon Association for the Deaf, President