

The Hon. Sara Gelser
Chairwoman before the Senate Committee
On Health Care and Early Childhood
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97430

Dear Representative Gelser,

I am writing to you as Chairperson for a non-profit organization that is in its infrastructure stage, Oregon Deaf Empowerment & Advocacy for Families (ODEAF). Our focus is to provide direct services to individuals who may be experiencing domestic violence and/or sexual assault. I would like to take a moment and share with you what this Senate Bill 449 can do for my organization and community in which I reside.

If you will, please think about the effectiveness and efficiency individuals in distress experience when they are in the safety planning stages of an escape from an abusive situation. Now consider the additional trauma a person may have when miscommunication occurs simply because they are not understood. To provide direct services will not only surpass many of these unnecessary moments to express their current needs, but it truly is life or death for some of these folks.

This is not a time to find interpreters who may or may not be able to facilitate communication when there is a crisis situation. The faster we can reach them means the faster we can support them to safety once again.

I plead with you to support the upcoming SB 449 during the next legislative session.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,

Marla Todd



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