

## Public Comments SB 1018

My name is Clark Anderson. I am retired from work in hospital/health care administration and have a Ph.D. and an MBA. I am a member of ODHHS-Advisory Committee. I am also the President of two organizations that have the goal of meeting or advocating for the needs of the hard of hearing: Hearing Loss Association of Oregon and Oregon Communication Access Project which together represent hundreds of hard of hearing people.

I identify as being hard of hearing, having had a progressive hearing loss and want to be able to communicate with the greater hearing population as well as with other hard of hearing individuals who rarely understand sign language interpreting. When hearing aids no longer worked for me I got two cochlear implants. Even with these devices I have difficulty understanding speech without assistive technology and/or captioning.

My comments follow.

- 1) The references throughout the bill to “Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing” should eliminate the category “Deaf Blind.”
  - a) The disability category “Deaf-Blind” should be assumed under the category Deaf.
  - b) Furthermore, if retained, there should be a separate category “Hard of Hearing-Blind”. Keeping in mind that the Hard of Hearing, at 94%, far outnumbers the Deaf/deaf at 6% of the hearing disabled population. Therefore it is most likely that the hard of hearing-blind would outnumber those who are Deaf-Blind. I would object to this for the same reason that I reject the “Deaf-Blind category.
  - c) Although blindness is very Both people who are Deaf and those who are hard of hearing have various conditions that affect communication—we cannot form a different groups for each
- 2) References throughout to “sign language interpreter” or interpretation should include assistive listening devices, closed captions and CART providers. Their being omitted makes this bill a Deaf-centric document. Keep in mind that the Hard of Hearing, at 94%, far outnumbers the Deaf/deaf at 6% of the hearing disabled population.

### Section 2(3):

- 1) As written: *The committee consists of nine members appointed by the Director of Human Services. Of the members appointed under subsection (2) of this section:*
  - a) *Three must be, or must represent, individuals who are deaf;*
  - b) *Three must be, or must represent, individuals who are deaf-blind; and*
  - c) *Three must be, or must represent, individuals who are hard of hearing.*
- 2) Comment: Use of the disability category “Deaf-Blind” should be assumed by the category Deaf.
  - a) If the category “Deaf-Blind” is retained, there should be a separate category “Hard of Hearing-Blind. After all, the Hard of Hearing, at 94%, far outnumber the Deaf/deaf at 6% of the hearing disabled population. Therefore it is most likely that the hard of hearing-blind would outnumber those who are Deaf-Blind.
  - b) Hard of hearing persons depend on visual cues for understanding speech; it is amazing how my ability to understand suffers when I don’t wear my glasses!

### 3) Section 3

- a) This section refers to responsibilities of the Committee that include:
  - i) Reviewing and conducting studies

## Public Comments SB 1018

- (1) I would substitute “collecting, reviewing and evaluating” throughout. There is no indication that the Committee will have the resources to conduct studies and
  - (2) To conduct studies would be very expensive, and
  - (3) Consultants would be better able to conduct studies.
- 4) There are references to sign language interpreting or interpreters throughout the document but exclude the auxiliary aids that Hard of Hearing persons depend on for understand speech. These include assistive listening devices, closed captioning and CART providers. Without these aids and services the Hard of Hearing are excluded from needed auxiliary communication aids and services.

Thank you for considering this bill and for considering my comments.

*Clark Anderson*

59641 McKenzie River

PO Box 154

Blue River, OR 97413

clarkoa@msn.com