



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Real Estate Agency

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February 1, 2019

Senator James I. Manning  
900 Court Street Northeast S-205  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Senator Manning:

During the Oregon Real Estate Agency's budget hearing before the Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development, my response to your question about real estate license examinations offered in languages other than American English (English) was incorrect. In the moment, I confused the arrangements made for those with sight impairments, learning disabilities and other special needs which require accommodations with those requesting interpretation services. I realized my error after the presentation.

Real estate license examinations are offered only in English by computer through our examination services contractor. The Agency has had internal discussions about the barriers this causes for potential licensees for whom English is not their primary language. The Agency intends to continue this discussion with the Real Estate Board as well as other Oregon licensing Agencies and counterparts in other states currently offering real estate examinations in languages other than English.

Accommodating additional languages for license exams would require a complete overhaul of the current environment in which the Agency licenses and regulates. Real estate schools currently offer pre-license education only in English. Oregon's laws and rules, which real estate licensees need to know, understand, and apply, are exclusively in English. The legal real estate contracts and documents that licensees present to their clients are in English. When a licensee faces disciplinary action, investigations and hearings before an administrative law judge, are conducted in English. In addition to the overwhelming scope of changes needed to offer services in alternative languages the Agency would need to amend or renegotiate the contract with the examination provider.

While the Agency does not receive frequent inquiries, the Agency recognizes the emergent need of services in languages other than English. The Agency intends to continue to review how we can accommodate all Oregonians and identify the resources needed to address this issue.

Sincerely,

Dean Owens  
Acting Real Estate Commissioner

cc: Representative David Gomberg, Senator Jeff Golden, Senator Bill Hansell,, Representative Paul Evans, Representative Gary Leif, Representative Rachel Prusak, Representative Duane Stark, Michelle Deister, Haylee Morse-Miller