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TO: Chair Taylor
Vice-Chair Knopp
Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce

FR: Alma Raya, Legislative Specialist, Oregon AFL-CIO
RE: Oregon AFL-CIO Support for HB 2231A

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across the state, and we advocate for working families to have better working conditions with livable wages. Healthcare Interpreters are essential for the many Oregonians with limited English proficiency whose health is on the line. Unfortunately, these interpreters are not rewarded fairly for their work which has led to many issues in the workforce. HB 2231A would address these concerns by allowing Healthcare Interpreters to collectively bargain to achieve industry standards.

Currently Healthcare Interpreters are independent contractors, but they are unable to negotiate their employment conditions, instead they are often required to work under terms that far below industry standards with salaries that can barely pay the bills. Interpreters are required to travel long distances without being compensated for mileage or their time on the road. They do not receive cancellation notices in a timely manner, and they are not compensated for full time scheduled appointments. Interpreters frequently discontinue their education and further certifications in order to seek additional jobs that can provide for their families. HB 2231A will enable interpreters to negotiate clear terms of employment so that they can be prepared to provide quality and necessary services that our communities rely on. Thank you for your consideration, we urge you to vote yes on HB 2231 A.