

For the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety...

Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 4115

February 6, 2019

House Committee on Health Care

Adrian Arias

Health Care Interpreter (ORS 413.550)

Oregon Court Interpreter (ORS 45.291)

Washington Court Interpreter (RCW 2.43.070)

Good afternoon Chair Salinas, Vices Chair Nosse and Hayden, my name is Adrian Arias and I have worked exclusively as a health care interpreter and court interpreter in Oregon and Washington for the past 18 years.

In my opinion, HB's 4115 well-intentioned health care interpreter requirement to exclusively use interpreters from a registry maintained by the current authority, overlooks the current benefit to the public peace, health and safety provided by court interpreters, who also work as health care interpreters, but whose names do not appear on the authority's registry. These interpreters' names, currently over 100, do appear, however, on the Oregon Judicial Department's Certified and Registered Court Interpreter Roster, (link, <https://www.courts.oregon.gov/programs/interpreters/Documents/CertifiedInterpreterRoster.pdf>).

What skill and ability standards do court interpreters meet to become certified? Significantly high ones, as the certification exam passing rates show. In Oregon, the court interpreter certification exam passing rate is 18% (Source: Court Language Access Services, Certification and Training Coordinator, Oregon Judicial Department). The Core Health Care Interpreter exam passing rate is 83% (Source: CCHI 2018 Annual Report, Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters). This legislation would eliminate a pool of the most competent interpreters currently available in Oregon. The new legislation could be improved by grandfathering the certified court interpreters on the OJD roster into the authority's registry.

Should this legislation exclude the court interpreters currently also providing language services as healthcare interpreters? I answer quoting from an ancient parable: "No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them."

Sincerely,

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