



## Memorandum

To: Rep. Andrea Salinas, Chair House Health Care Committee  
Rep. Cedric Hayden, Vice-Chair House Health Care Committee  
Rep. Rob Nosse, Vice-Chaire House Health Care  
Members of the House Health Care Committee

From: Danielle Sobel, MPH, Policy and Governmental Affairs Senior Director  
Marty Carty, Policy Senior Manager

Date: February 6, 2020

Re: Support for HB 4115

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On behalf of the Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA), we respectfully request your support of HB 4115. HB 4115 requires health care providers, including CCOs and health care interpreter agencies, to ensure that any interpretation service offered to patients is executed by an OHA certified or qualified health care interpreter. Trained health care interpreters bridge the language and cultural gap that often exists between a health care provider and a limited English proficient (LEP) patient, ensuring proper communication to achieve the highest quality of care.

This bill levels the playing field and ensures that health care providers and patients are getting appropriate and culturally competent interpretation, especially in languages of lesser diffusion. Health care interpreters (HCIs) currently have access to training to become certified or qualified in their specific language (the status of qualified or certified is particular to each individual language), however, are disincentivized from obtaining this training due to external forces (both market and regulatory). HCI's are usually independent contractors who contract with health care interpreter agencies; setting a required baseline (i.e. qualified/certified), ensures that all entities who serve patients who need HCIs, can trust that the interpreter assigned to their patient is competent and is providing the highest level of care by accurately interpreting complex medical terminology.

Community health centers are health care providers within the CCO networks, providing care to Oregon's underserved populations, including **one in four** Oregon Health Plan members, delivering integrated primary care, including dental and behavioral health services, **to over 433,000 Oregonians annually**. Our members work daily in the communities where interpretation is critical component to their patient's total health and utilize interpretation services. Knowing that the interpretation they utilize, whether in-person or via phone, is being done by a qualified/certified health care interpreter is key to obtaining the best outcome for their patient. Our members also understand, and appreciate the included "free or affordable training" option that is/will be available to train any staff they utilize to maximize the impact of competent, culturally relevant interpretation for all our patients.

We urge your support of HB 4115 which seeks to remove language and cultural barriers for our patients.