
Oregon Academy of Audiology



**Testimony in Support:
HB 2498
Joint Committee on Transportation
March 4, 2021
Bryan Greenaway, Au.D., CH-TM
Legislative Chair, OAA**

Co-Chair Beyer, Co-Chair McLain, Co-Vice Chair Boquist, Co-Vice Chair Noble and Members of the Joint Transportation Committee:

The Oregon Academy of Audiology, as a representative of the professional audiology community in Oregon, strongly supports the passage of HB 2498. The bill would allow persons who own or operate a vehicle in Oregon to request a registration card providing notification that the owner or operator may be deaf or hard of hearing. We sincerely appreciate the sponsors of the bill bringing this much-needed and long-overdue legislation forward.

With increased focus on police response, it is crucial that we assist law enforcement personnel with identifying those citizens who, due to their inability to hear commands, may not be able to understand and follow the directions given to them. This can lead to tragic consequences. HB 2498 is enabling legislation; it would not require deaf and hard of hearing drivers to obtain these special registration cards. However, for those who choose this option, it could be lifesaving.

We understand that the -1 amendments being proposed would remove language making this policy part of the Oregon Vehicle Code. We also understand that the bill would not prohibit the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) from placing a restriction on these registrations, much like it does for drivers with vision challenges. We support the bill as introduced or with the -1 amendments as an essential tool for a segment of our population whose safety is threatened by the current regulations.

Thank you in advance for considering the testimony of the Oregon Academy of Audiology in support of HB 2498, and we urge your aye vote.