

LETTER FROM THE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Working together to keep our Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Community safe

Chair Sen. Sara Gelser Blouin
Senate Committee on Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

February 1, 2022

SUBJECT: General Comment on behalf of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Oregonians on SB 1556

To the Chair Rep. Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Robinson, and members of the Committee:

Hello! This letter is intended to provide public education and increase awareness of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Oregonians. For so many years, this language and culturally marginalized group have been denied access to information, goods, and services in the State of Oregon. The final report in 2016 of the [Community-based Needs Assessment \(CNA\) of Oregon's Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#) communities conducted by the Research & Resource Center on Deaf communities at Western Oregon University as this was funded by the 2015 Oregon Legislature, we were able to learn countless challenges and barriers.

The bulletin will highlight areas of recommendations to better prepare for inclusion with the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing individuals.

- There would be times when it comes to information sharing the resources that provides services to individuals who are Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing, it is recommended that it is being shared with the good faith of inclusion, objective, and unbiased in which a full spectrum of information is available in regards to Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing.
- The direct communication between the person to person using the same language does promote effective interaction. When a person does not maximize the fullest ability to have an effective communication interaction, reasonable accommodation shall be incorporated.
- When it comes to the provision of educational video(s) for training purposes, it is recommended that the video includes Deaf interpreters on the screen along with captioning and written transcript to be readily available.
- Explore to set aside resources to enable the provision of accommodation either on-site or virtually. The accommodations do not limit to interpreting service, captioning, assistive-listening devices, and more. Please contact us for more information.

- When a situation occurs that involves working with family and children, please explore having a team interpreter of ASL/English and Deaf Interpreters to work with young age Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing children.
- Explore to include a disclaimer on the flier and any type of announcement in any form of communication to the general public, the suggested language would be “if you need a disability-related accommodation e.g., interpreter or live captioning in order to participate in an event. please notify the name of the contact person/department at the telephone number and email address at least 3 business days in advance.

We respectfully ask for the Committee’s to seek commitment from the author(s) and their collective peers to ensure the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing constituents are included in their effort.

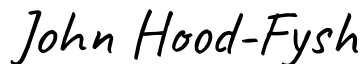
Sincerely,



Chad A. Ludwig, MSW, ADAC, OHCI, DI
Executive Director




Steven M. Brown, MPA, MA
President

John Hood-Fysh
President
Oregon Chapter, Hearing Loss Association



Founded in 2017, **Bridges Oregon, Inc.** is a new culturally responsive nonprofit organization serving Oregonians who are Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing or face other communication barriers. It is in our mission to facilitate equity and inclusiveness and to provide a bridge to opportunities through advocacy, education, and communication. This organization was created

by Deaf individuals, we provide high-quality services to enable the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing to freely interact with mainstream society.

Founded in 1921, the **Oregon Association of the Deaf, Inc.** embraces our value of mutual assistance and cooperation in matters essential to our general welfare and its mission to promote, protect, and preserve civil rights and advocate to enhance the quality of life for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.

Founded in 2003, the **Oregon State Association of Hearing Loss Association of America** is a non-profit organization, is dedicated to the well-being of people of all ages and communities who do not hear well.