



Oregon Legislature
Senate Committee on Human Services
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

February 5, 2023

SUBJECT: SB 685 • Modifies definition of “Communication Facilitator.

To the Chair Sen. Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Sen. Robinson, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services.

Hello! Bridges Oregon, Inc. is a nonprofit organization serving Oregonians who are Deaf, DeafBlind, or 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 is to disclose that this agency have a direct contract with Oregon Public Utility Commission (OPUC) in provision of Communication Facilitator service.

The community passed a legislative bill back in 2019, was a House Bill 3205
<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2019R1/Measures/Overview/HB3205>

Right now, in the ORS 759.693 Definition, it says

759.693 Definitions. As used in ORS 759.693 to 759.698, unless the context requires otherwise:

(5) “Communication facilitator” means a person who provides professional, in-person assistive services that are necessary to help a person communicate effectively via a telecommunication device, with or without the use of an assistive telecommunication device or a telecommunications relay service, if the person receiving the services is:

- (a) Deaf-blind;
- (b) Deaf; or
- (c) Hard of hearing and has a physical disability that limits the person’s expressive communication.

Right now, it read as three separate populations and we need to clarify the (b) to:

(b) “Deaf and has a physical disability that limits the person’s expressive communication.”

I beseech you to accept the modification and please vote yes to SB 685.

Sincerely,


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

1115 Madison St NE, #1069 • Salem, OR 97301
(971) 202-1500 • info@bridgesoregon.org • BridgesOregon.org