

Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden and members of the committee,

My name is Yin Hanson. I have worked as a Mandarin Chinese Interpreter since 2013. I live in Happy Valley, Oregon.

I serve some of the most vulnerable patients in our healthcare system. Because they have limited English capabilities, they are unable to navigate the healthcare system to get proper health care for themselves.

This is an important matter for hundreds of millions of people's health and lives. Therefore, I am testifying in support of SB 584.

I was only paid \$20 per hour to go for on-site appointments, and most of those appointments were at least 10 miles away from my house. The one-hour appointment's round trip would take me about one hour on the road, and even longer with traffic. Thus, I effectively only made \$10 that hour, and I had to fill up on gas at my own cost. Even now, the hourly rate has not risen much, and it is still not enough to cover hours I spend on the road, travel time, and the sky high gas prices at my own expense.

We, the Oregon interpreters, should get paid as much as other states that pay their interpreters an average of \$40 per hour, and 0.65 per mile travel costs.

According to a cost-of living analysis by insure.com, the cost of living is 24 percent more than the national average, which makes Oregon the seventh most expensive state to live in. Conclusion: We live in the SEVENTH MOST EXPENSIVE STATE. Why do we get paid such low hourly rates compared to other states?

We, all the Oregon interpreters, need to pay our expensive bills too. There is also the issue of lack of transparency on how much money the state is spending on health care interpreting language access. I am unable to find any sources. The state should have monthly or more frequent reports to show how much money they spend and how they distribute it. Those reports should be posted on the public website.

Providing quality language access online portal will build towards Oregon's Health Equity goals by saving providers money through allowing them to directly contract with interpreters instead of going through a third party. This will let the interpreters have the chance to get fair hourly paychecks to make an adequate income to cover our living expenses, and at same time, help the LEP people are able to access all kinds of assistance.

Twenty years ago, my parents were here in Portland, looking for interpreters to help them to have adequate medical care. Back then, I did not have adequate English skills to help them. I have realized over the years of my interpreting experiences, there are a significant number of people like my parents who are desperately waiting for language interpretation services.