



# OREGON ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

Eye Physicians & Surgeons

**TO:** Chair Nosse  
Vice Chairs Nelson and Goodwin  
Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

**FR:** Sabrina Riggs  
*Oregon Academy of Ophthalmology*  
[Sabrina@daltonadvocacy.com](mailto:Sabrina@daltonadvocacy.com)

**RE: Support for HB 2538**

The Oregon Academy of Ophthalmology is the professional association of eye physicians and surgeons who specialize in the medical and surgical treatment of eye diseases and other conditions, and also provide vision care services. The OAO writes today in strong support of HB 2538, which would ensure that clinicians receive reimbursement for providing healthcare interpreter services.

In 2021, the Legislature passed HB 2359, which requires clinicians to provide certified or qualified healthcare interpreter services. Our members believe that this requirement is a critical step towards health equity.

Currently, the cost for clinicians to provide these critical services can be significant. Clinicians are responsible for these costs for patients who are commercially insured, uninsured or are on Medicare. Oregon Health Plan recognizes the importance of interpretation services, and will cover at least some of the cost (although fee-for-service only pays a flat rate of \$58, which often does not cover the full cost).

Considering the many challenges clinics are facing today— including challenges and increased costs related to the COVID-19 pandemic—it is unsustainable for clinics to continue bearing such a large portion of the expenses. HB 2538 will ensure clinicians are reimbursed for providing legally mandated health care interpretation services.

OAO respectfully urges the Committee to support HB 2538.