



February 8, 2023

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in favor of SB 584. For the record, my name is Emerson Hamlin, and I'm speaking on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association. ONA is Oregon's oldest and largest nursing union and professional association, and we are proud to represent 15,000 health care providers, including RNs, advanced practice nurses, and allied health workers.

Nurses need to be able to communicate with their patient and their patient's family to provide appropriate care. Without an interpreter, details on the patient's condition, follow up appointments, and medication are easily lost, potentially resulting in dangerous health outcomes for the patient. Our providers rely on interpreters, and they are key partners in patient care.

However, as you've heard, Oregon does not treat interpreters as partners in this work. Our interpreters make less than those working in Washington, and they have struggled to access PPE and healthcare during a global pandemic. SB 584 seeks to improve circumstances for patients, interpreters, and providers by directing OHA to study the best model for an online platform that would include scheduling and billing mechanisms. It would also ensure that patients are working with credentialed interpreters who can meet their needs. SB 584 will help keep patients safe, and fairly compensate workers. ONA urges your support. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Emerson Hamlin

Political Organizer, Oregon Nurses Association