

Submitter: VICTORIA GUILLEN
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB584

The Honorable Rev. Dr. Deb. Patterson
Chair, Oregon State Senate Committee on Health Care

The Honorable Cedric Hayden
Vice Chair, Oregon State Senate Committee of Health Care

Dear Senator Patterson and Senator Hayden,

My name is Victoria Guillen and I am an Oregon-based healthcare interpreter in Spanish oppose Oregon Senate Bill 584. This bill would require the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to develop a web-based platform to support the scheduling and payment of interpreters for language access for Oregonian health care patients. I oppose this bill because it threatens to make my life as an independent contractor much more difficult.

Nationally more than 80% of interpreters and translators work Independent Contractors (ICs). As an IC, I set my hours - I can accept or refuse assignments according to my schedule. This is an enormous advantage to those of us who have child or eldercare responsibilities, for example. I set my rates, and can negotiate rates with my clients. For each of the companies I work with, I had to demonstrate my skills and qualifications, including taking their tests, which in many cases are harder than the national certification tests offered in health care by CCHI and IMIA. I have my Medical Certification from Washington State, working at home is wonderful, helping patients with calls like 911, ED, Urgent Care, financial services, Pharmacy, Crisis Line, medical appointments also providers and patients calling over the phone.

Having the Oregon Health Authority replace the many companies working in Oregon will make my life more challenging. Instead of being on the "rolodex" of several companies which makes it possible to fill my schedule out, I will be dependent on one client to provide assignments in Oregon. The bill also does not clarify how rates will be set, or who sets them.

Language access in health care in Oregon could be improved, but this bill isn't the way to do it.

Respectfully

Victoria Guillen
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