

Submitter: Erin Neff-Minyard  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB584

Dear Senate Committee on Health Care,

I am writing to you as an Oregon Certified Health Care Interpreter who has full-time employment within a health system to oppose SB 584. I fully support the idea of all health care interpreters earning a livable wage. However, SB 584 is not the way to achieve that goal. Here are my concerns:

- If health systems are frustrated with the platform, they won't use it. They will pay for the services out of their own pocket, and it will defeat the purpose of the platform.
- There will be intense competition for the few well-paid jobs that come through the platform, forcing interpreters to be on their phones even during interpreting assignments as many Washington interpreters are doing, to try to get as many jobs as they can to pay their bills. This adds a great deal of additional stress to interpreters trying to make a living, not to mention dividing their attention from a current interpreting assignment.
- Agencies do an enormous amount of work for health systems to ensure interpreters are meeting compliance requirements mandated by CMS and the Joint Commission. Will OHA have the capacity to ensure those requirements are met? How difficult will it be to get the detailed information health systems need to confirm these requirements?
- Competition and having a variety of agencies to choose from is a good thing for patients, interpreters, and health systems in terms of customer service and quality. HB 584 essentially removes that option.

A better solution would be for the interpreter union to work with the CCO contracts across the state to pay a 2-hour minimum and a livable hourly wage, such as CareOregon has done, rather than create another bureaucratic hurdle to jump through that will be extremely expensive and time-consuming to create with questionable chance of success.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Erin Neff-Minyard, Ed.M., CHITM  
Portland, Oregon