

Testimony in Favor of SB 569 - Closed Captioning
Delivered to HECHS
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[SB 569](#)

Vice chairs Nguyen and Sharf, members of the committee, thank you for your time today,

For the record, my name is Lisa Reynolds, state representative for HD 34.

I am honored to be a chief co-sponsor with Sen Gelser Blouin on SB 569, and I am grateful for the advocates who brought this forward.

As a healthcare provider, I share the concern that all people should have as much access as possible to engage in community and build full lives. This is a vital part of maintaining mental health and wellbeing.

This is an issue that particularly touches Oregonians. **In 2017, the CDC reported that Oregon had the second-highest prevalence of hearing loss in the nation, with almost 25% of Oregonians experiencing some level of hearing loss.** That's a quarter of our Oregon residents. Without SB 569, a significant portion of Oregonians' access to vital cultural and social engagement rests on the whim of venues' decision to enable closed captioning.

Furthermore, some studies have shown that roughly 80% of those who use closed captioning and subtitles are not deaf or hard of hearing. Closed captioning is used widely by people of all abilities to aid in their understanding of media, culture, and language. And we all know how helpful closed captioning is when we're in a noisy space trying to keep track of something going on on the TV! And the accents on Brit crime mysteries!

We must ensure that public places are welcoming to all. We already require that our sidewalks and restrooms are accessible to folks in wheelchairs. The signs next to each of our office doors have braille on them so that our blind constituents can find our offices. Right now, an ASL interpreter is helping communicate our hearing to Oregonians who may need to use sign language. These factors which were initially viewed as accommodations when implemented have now become a

part of our culture. Shouldn't we continue that inclusive spirit to all people who could benefit from it? In all public spaces? We must ensure that Oregonians have the same access to broadcast media and cinematic arts, journalism, information, and entertainment. All with technology that exists in the tv or computer.

This bill received 4 aye votes and 1 nay vote in Senate Human Services, and garnered 21 Aye votes on the senate floor, with 8 nays and 1 excused.

Thank you.