

Chairwoman of the Senate Committee
on Health Care and Early Childhood
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

To Honorable Senator Sara Gelser,

This letter is to express my wishes to see that SB 449 happen! This has been our OAD's (Oregon Association of the Deaf) lifelong goal to set the permanent service center for the Deaf, Deaf-blind and Hard of Hearing in serving statewide Oregonians to meet their needs. We used to have the service center in Portland years ago from 1985 to 1994 that I helped to involve and operate it but it was a non-profit organization with limited funds based on donations and small grants that eventually folded several years later. The center used to be called as Tri-County Service Center for the Deaf and Hearing impaired, then the name was changed to Deaf Service Center before it was folded. Due to my past experience with this service center, it does still very much need to be set again and offer the services available to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

It will be favorable to see our Oregon Government supporting it, just like the state of Washington currently funding 4 or 5 service centers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing! The service center can be utilized available to statewide offer informational & interpreting referrals, technical assistance, educational/job advices, advocacy supports, counseling and communication & cultural/linguistic outreach according to ADA laws in order to meet Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard or Hearing Oregonians' Independent living needs.

Thank you for your serious consideration on this bill to be passed.

Betsy Burks
PCC ASL Instructor
Deaf Portland resident