



Convo Communications, LLC
Chief Executive Officers:
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Senator Sara Gelser, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Early Childhood
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Sara Gelser,

We, the Chief Executive Officers of Convo Communications, support and encourage the passage of Senate Bill 449. Hearing loss need no longer be a significant barrier to communication, thanks to today's technology. Before video relay services, real-time captioning, and video remote interpreting and other innovations; losing your hearing excluded you from normal participation in educational, public and social affairs. The emotional and psychological impacts of that exclusion can be profound and costly for persons of every age. Currently Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing individuals suffer from a chronic need for provision of access to communication, advocacy, educational and employment services. These services would make the lives of this population functionally equivalent to that of the rest of Oregon's citizens. Currently Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing individuals are disadvantaged by structural barriers that SB 449 would begin to remove.

Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing people are still being excluded, despite availability of communication technology. Businesses, government programs, and social services are under-informed about the available communication technologies and legal provisions to accommodate people who need them. A tiny number of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing people are able to advocate for their own communication rights and do so tirelessly, however, the vast majority don't know their rights and are unable to be heard. In Oregon, there is no designated place or program to which these citizens can turn for the support, guidance and counseling they need to gain stability and productivity in their daily lives Oregon Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing services would provide these much needed resources.

We ask you and your committee to bring SB 449 to the floor in the Senate and House with a DO PASS recommendation. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Jarrod Musano
CEO, Convo Communications