

Maryland Interpreter License Team's SB431 Oral Testimonial for Senate Hearing

- Consumer protection bill
- According to Director Brick of the MD GODHH, MD is the only state with no regulation of sign language interpreters.
- Some may wonder why we house the bill under the Department of Labor with support from the ODHH because ODHH is a partisan office serving at the pleasure of the Governor.
- There are businesses in Maryland that already follow the practices outlined in this bill. They believe in the spirit of what we are proposing.
- The businesses who would oppose the bill are the ones who have been hiring non-qualified, non-certified, and in some instances, fraudulent interpreters. The practice is being done because there is a lack of regulation or enforcement of such and there are no consequences.
- These unqualified interpreters are exploited by these businesses because they are put in situations in which they believe is sanctioned by the business and therefore, sound.
- Horror stories: Tara's & Peg's stories
- Deaf people live with the reality that their voices might never be truly heard. This bill provides a way for the state to recognize that protections ensure we don't lose before we even get a chance to try.
- Because there is a lack of consumer protection, there have been cases where medical and legal ramifications are permanent and life-changing. There is no telling the countless voiceless that have suffered from this lack of protection.

Stats/Numbers

468 Certified Interpreters: Live in Maryland

124 Certified Interpreters: Live in DC

82 Certified Interpreters: Live in North Va

25 Certified Interpreters: Live in Del

Total Interpreters Available to Serve Maryland from Region: 699