



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
*Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired*

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Stacie J. Mawson, Executive Director  
Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired  
Good Morning,

Senator Harris, Representative Villano, members of the Human Services Committee.

First, I would like to take this time to thank the Human Service Committee for raising this bill on behalf of the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired. I appreciate the support of the Human Services Committee.

I appreciate this opportunity to address you concerning HB 7301 An Act Concerning the Availability of Qualified Interpreter Services.

In 1997 CDHI collaboratively worked with the deaf and hard of hearing communities to establish a statewide Interpreter Registration mandate.

In 1997 there was a section of CDHI's Statute which addressed the issues of an individual's right to an interpreter and specific entities responsibility to provide interpreter services.

The Commission and the constituents were grateful that interpreter registration became a law. Unfortunately, at the same time, part of our original statute addressing the right of a person to have an interpreter and specific entities' responsibility to provide interpreter services was inadvertently omitted.

The deaf and hard of hearing community and the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired have become frustrated in responding to various entities regarding the rights of people who are deaf and hard of hearing to receive interpreting services. There is currently no specific statute to identify the circumstances in which a person who is deaf or hard of hearing is entitled to an interpreter and no indication of who is responsible.

The Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired's Advisory Board, CDHI Staff, and the deaf and hard of hearing community would like this reinstated as a point of clarification.

We would appreciate your support in passing HB 7301.

I would be happy to answer any questions.