



February 28, 2010

Dear Legislator:

The Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society (NOTIS) is a Washington based professional organization dedicated to the betterment of the interpretation and translation industry. The Society was established in 1988 to serve the Pacific Northwest region and is a chapter of the American Translators Association (ATA). Besides promoting high standards of ethics, practices and competence among its members, NOTIS seeks to influence public policy where it applies to the professions of translation and interpretation. The NOTIS Medical Interpreters Special Interest Group (Med SIG) was established in 2005 when the Society of Medical Interpreters (SOMI) united with NOTIS. The Med SIG continues the work of SOMI providing training and information on current practices and ethics in medical interpreting. Many of Washington's most active and well-trained medical interpreters, and in particular DSHS medical interpreters, are members of the NOTIS Med SIG and participate frequently in workshops, forums and other events. Among many specialized offerings, the Med SIG has provided training on infection control, and how to deal with end of life situations. This month the Med SIG sponsored a training titled "Mechanics of Medical Interpreting" presented by Linda Golley, Director of Interpreter Services at the University of Washington. The training was a great introduction for new interpreters and a seasoned review for the more experienced—every seat was filled.

As professionals in our combined fields, we seek self improvement through membership in our local professional organizations. The Washington State Court Interpreters and Translators Society (WITS) is considered our sister organization. Collectively, we seek professional guidance and representation, as many of us are among the most highly-concerned and implicated stakeholders in the field of language access and medical interpreting. It is clear that as medical interpreters, through the services availed by NOTIS and the MedSIG, we will continue to do our part to provide the absolute best and most ethical services to LEP clients and their providers.

The Med SIG has been following **Interpreter Bill SB6726** and urges your support for the bill which is soon to be on the House floor. Many members of SOMI and the Med SIG have spent a significant amount of time and effort over the last 10 years struggling to promote change in the profession. We see this bill as being the single most important change that has ever been considered and we are willing to support and help see these changes through to fruition. We understand there will be a workgroup formed to create a new model for DSHS to contract with interpreters. We hope you will allow us to participate in the workgroup and supply the much needed voice of the interpreter, as it relates to shaping policy, administration and language access management. As major stakeholders, we have a keen understanding of our role and responsibility in maintaining the efficient provision of interpretation services in Washington. Please help us assume that responsibility by giving our representatives a place at the decision-making table.

Yours faithfully,

The NOTIS Med SIG

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