



from the office of

SENATOR CHUCK THOMSEN

PRESS RELEASE

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Senator Thomsen Carries Bipartisan Bill for Safer Traffic Stops

HB 2498 has the potential to deescalate traffic stops

HOOD RIVER, Ore. – The Senate passed [House Bill 2498](#) today on a unanimous vote. The legislation was carried by Senator Chuck Thomsen (R-Hood River), the only Senate chief sponsor and author of the concept last session.

When someone who is deaf or hard of hearing is involved in a traffic stop, there is currently no established procedure of how to communicate that impairment to law enforcement. HB 2498 can diffuse unnecessary confrontation by allowing those with hearing loss to document that on driver’s licenses and/or vehicle registration.

“Miscommunication between law enforcement and the public can cause routine traffic stops to turn dangerous,” Senator Thomsen said. “This tool will also give law enforcement all the information necessary to best serve the people they are sworn to protect.”

The new communication tool for drivers with hearing loss is endorsed by the Oregon Association of the Deaf (OAD), The Oregon Academy of Audiology, and over 180 OAD members.

“Having easy-to-access documentation will make traffic stops safer and less stressful for both the driver and police,” Thomsen added. “Police, policymakers, and drivers all have the same goal: to ensure clear communication in situations where safety is a priority.”

HB 2498 was sponsored by 18 bipartisan, bicameral members of the Legislature and will now head to the Governor’s desk for her signature.

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