

I am a full-time interpreter with Sorenson Communications and have been working as such for 5 years. I have worked as an interpreter off and on for over 20 years. To work in the State of Missouri as an interpreter, we are required to have State Certification and Licensure. To be State certified and licensed, we must take a written and performance test. When I applied at Sorenson, my skills were again evaluated and tested. All interpreters have again been required to be tested and evaluated in the past several months. My manager is required to "plug in" and observe periodically. Sorenson provides mentorship programs as well as a professional development department that we are encouraged to contact at anytime if we feel there is anything we can do to improve a specific skill or just need help in a particular area. In the State of Missouri, interpreters are also required to retain license and certification by attending workshops for a minimum of 12 hours annually, commonly referred to as CEU's - Continuing Education Units. Sorenson also provides many varied workshops throughout the year that we may attend if desired. Sorenson will lose many deserving, well-qualified and talented interpreters if RID forces their certification process on all VRS providers. I believe an interpreter who has life-experience, has been involved with the Deaf community, has worked in the field, been employed as a VRS interpreter for several years, and follows all the above criteria is a well-rounded, skilled and highly qualified interpreter. Why should NAD/RID be the ONLY testing criteria that proves an interpreter's skill to allow a person to be employed as a VRS interpreter? I strongly hope you will give the above your consideration when reviewing this proposal.