

I would like to share my concern that the FCC is considering that all VRS interpreters hold national certification. If you were to mandate that all VRS providers employ only nationally certified interpreters I am quite certain that the great strides taken to provide equal access to the Deaf community would suffer greatly. Members of my family have finally achieved a level of communication access never known and hundreds of the phone calls processed for my family and friends have been successfully interpreted by those who do not hold national certification.

As a practicing professional interpreter I do agree that certification is important and I encourage all interpreters to work towards certification. However RID cannot be the only answer. There are many state certification systems that offer a valid and reliable means of assessing interpreting skills. As a state certified interpreter I have worked with many interpreters who are incredibly qualified to provide VRS services. One organization's measure of proficiency should not be blindly accepted as the standard. Rather, all VRS interpreters should be required to undergo an in house assessment of interpreting competence. With this tool providers will be able to identify the interpreters who have the level of competency required to work in the VRS environment.

As an employee of a VRS company I know how difficult the work is and I also know it's all about choice. On any given day, in any given moment you can be the best interpreter or the worst. The success of a call is not only about skills. It's about attitude, flexibility, interpersonal relationships and world knowledge. You can be revered one moment and damned the next. Regardless of your certification level it is impossible to please every caller, but every caller is free to choose. At the press of a button I can call a team or hand off the call. My goal is to meet the needs of the caller and I have the means in place to do so.

I am also RID certified and have been so for many years. I must say that I struggle with the direction taken by our member driven organization. I am concerned that too often we use our influence to advocate more for the needs of the Deaf community and less for the needs of the Interpreting community. Like many interpreters, I have been guilty in the past of allowing RID to be my voice but not today and not on this issue.

Today my voice represents the hundreds of qualified interpreters who are capable and willing to serve the Deaf community thru VRS who have been dismissed by RID and NAD.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share my concerns,

Becky Yadrich

KS: 5/5

RID: CI/CT