

I am writing to formally disagree with the RID's latest suggestion that all VRS interpreters be certified. I have been interpreting for 16 years and have seen several - more than several - instances of an interpreter who is certified being not so qualified. Certified does not magically or automatically equal QUALIFIED. The RID themselves have admitted their testing processes over the years have not been accurately evaluated or presented... they've also admitted to some fraudulent results being handed out. So we cannot go on their word alone that by hiring only Certified interpreters in the VRS setting GUARANTEES you a qualified interpreter.

I have seen dozens of interpreters in my community ALONE who possess RID certification but are not qualified for the most simple interpreting assignment. Unfortunately our testing is not to the level it should be so one could easily say with confidence, "RID Certification means a qualified interpreter." It SHOULD be, but today, it just isn't.

SO much more goes into being qualified than a test... for example, interpreters who have deaf families. There are interpreters who have been using sign language since their births who now can NOT even take the certification test - because while they are very seasoned users of the language and brilliantly gifted interpreters - they do not possess a college degree. They did not NEED a college degree to learn the language, they were born with it.

Taking away a qualified interpreter's JOB, and then asking them to have the burden of a college degree with NO job, just to PAY RID money to get their job back.... seems unfair and frankly kind of shady.

RID will BENEFIT greatly financially if this decision passes. Their certification test today costs - \$220 for the written part, and \$305 for the performance part. That is in THEIR pocket \$525 dollars PER non-certified interpreter currently working in the VRS setting. How can you NOT see this suggestion as a conflict of interest?