



CITY OF  
**PORTLAND, OREGON**

**Amanda Fritz, Commissioner**

1221 SW Fourth Avenue, Suite 220  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
(503) 823-3008  
amanda@portlandoregon.gov

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Contact: Tim Crail (503) 823-3988**

**November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

## **CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO REQUIRE CAPTIONING ON TVS IN PUBLIC PLACES**

In a unanimous 5-0 vote on 11/18/15, the Portland City Council adopted an ordinance requiring all televisions in public places in the City of Portland to have captions turned on at all times. Captioning is a technology that provides services for people with hearing disabilities, people learning English as a second language, people learning to read, and everyone who may need written instructions in an emergency. In 2010, congress required closed captioning capacity on all TVs and playback devices. Portland's ordinance requires captioning to be turned on at all times on TVs in public places. The policy was developed BY City Commissioner Amanda Fritz in partnership with the Portland Commission on Disability, Hearing Loss Association of America, and the Oregon Association of the Deaf.

"This was a coalition effort represented by the community of people with hearing disabilities. It was great to work together on this shared interest. Captions are like electronic curb cuts. It took a lot of people a while to get use to the curb cuts on streets, but now we all use them. Having the captions on all the time means that television is accessible for all", said Carol Studenmund, President of LNS Captioning.

Following a public hearing in July, Commissioner Fritz reached out to many stakeholders. The Portland Business Alliance and Venture Portland remained neutral on the policy, but many community members expressed support. Commissioner Fritz's staff and the advocates also met with representatives of the Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association and considered their input before deciding to go forward with the original proposal after hearing significant support at a Town Hall she held in September.

"I am thankful to Commissioner Fritz and Portland City Council for listening to the concerns of my community and taking this bold action," said \_\_\_\_\_

"This is a great step forward in making the world a more equitable place for those among us who have hearing disabilities. I heard from many individuals and advocacy groups who indicated how important this action was to make them more connected to the world around them. The proposal we developed will serve as a model for other government entities. Recently, the Federal Aviation Administration developed a new policy requiring all airports to have captioning on at all times. That initiative gave a big boost to our efforts here in Portland. I expect that this requirement will soon be the

norm across the country. Universal access is the right policy choice”, said Commissioner Fritz.

The policy goes into effect in Portland on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Community members are welcome to contact Jasmine Wadsworth at 503-823-3008 with questions about implementation and compliance.

###