

To: Human Services Committee overseeing Raised Bill No. 5321

From: Rachel Spillane, Certified Sign Language Interpreter, Designee of FSW
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RE: Interpreting services, monitoring, fees

FSW Interpreting Services is part of FSW non-profit agency that provides many support services to the population at large as well as targeted population i.e. the Deaf Community. FSW Interpreting services has been continuously running since 1995 and provides over 4,000 interpreting requests per year with a staff of 36 interpreters.

FSW supports Bill 5321 to help improve delivery of Interpreting services in CT.

In addition, FSW needs clarification of the following items of Bill 5321.

1) On page 3 (d) Commencing September 1, 2014, any business entity, within the state or through remote access, employing an interpreter who is providing services in CT shall ensure the interpreter is in compliance with the requirements of this section.

Many video remote companies headquarters and sites are outside of CT and employ interpreters that do not reside in CT. What methodology is going to be employed to track all of the video remote interpreting that occurs in CT in order to ensure that those interpreters are registered with the State and comply with Bill 5321?

In addition, many interpreting agencies that do not have their headquarters in CT also provide interpreting services in CT and again what methodology is going to be employed to track those interpreters?

In addition, who is going to physically go to school systems, businesses etc. and check the credentials of each person who may be functioning as an interpreter? Many school systems do not use the word interpreter, they may use labels such as communication assistant, aide and etc. So this would mean that someone would have to go to the various schools and observe staff who work with the deaf in order to get a clear idea what their true job function is with the deaf child.

The monitoring questions also brings in the question of cost of doing this kind of follow up in order to comply with Bill 5321. The concern is that the cost will be on the backs of interpreters who have to pay the licensing fee in order to work in CT. There are 252 registered interpreters on the registry list, so even if the fees were \$100 per person, \$25,200 is not sufficient to cover monitoring costs. I think the cost of this type of monitoring system should not be based only on collection of interpreter's fees, but it should also be assessed against Video Remote Companies and outside interpreter agencies whose corporate headquarters are outside of CT but yet reap the monetary benefit of doing business in CT. Otherwise the cost of monitoring could put the fees to an unreasonable rate for interpreters who reside and work in CT, since rate was not even stated in this bill.

Thank you for your time and attention to the above matter.