



House of Representatives

File No. 829

General Assembly

January Session, 2015

(Reprint of File No. 386)

Substitute House Bill No. 6941
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 14, 2015

AN ACT CONCERNING STATE AGENCY INTERPRETER SERVICES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2015*) For purposes of this section,
2 "state agency" has the same meaning as provided in section 9-612 of
3 the general statutes and "interpreting" has the same meaning as
4 provided in section 46a-33a of the general statutes. Any state agency
5 that is unable to fulfill a request for interpreting services with its own
6 interpreting staff shall first request such services from the Department
7 of Rehabilitation Services and may seek such services elsewhere if (1)
8 the department is unable to fulfill the request in two business days, or
9 (2) the agency shows good cause that it needs such services
10 immediately. The provisions of this section shall not (A) apply to the
11 Department of Rehabilitation Services if the department needs
12 interpreting services related to an internal matter and the use of
13 department interpreters may raise confidentiality concerns, or (B)
14 affect any preexisting contract for interpreting services. Interpreting
15 services provided by a state agency shall be in accordance with the
16 provisions of section 46a-33a of the general statutes.

| | | |
|---|---------------------|-------------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>July 1, 2015</i> | New section |

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which requires state agencies without interpreting staff to request interpreting services from the Department of Rehabilitation Services, is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact as it codifies current practice.

House "A" strikes the underlying bill and its associated fiscal impact and replaces it with provisions whose fiscal impact is described above.

Background

In FY 14, 26 state agencies, including 15 colleges and UCONN (6 campuses) received approximately 31,000 hours of deaf and hard of hearing interpreting services from the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) at a cost of \$1.5 million. Seven of these agencies also paid for services for non-DORS interpreters. When DORS is unable to accommodate an agency's request for service, the agency is served by non-DORS interpreters.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Sources: Core-CT Financial Accounting System

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6941 (as amended by House "A")*****AN ACT CONCERNING STATE AGENCY INTERPRETER SERVICES.****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires state agencies unable to meet a request for deaf or hard of hearing interpreter services with their own staff to ask the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to provide the services before requesting them from elsewhere. The bill allows a state agency to seek interpreting services elsewhere if (1) DORS cannot fulfill the agency's request within two business days or (2) the agency shows good cause that it needs such services immediately. The bill applies to any office, department, board, council, commission, institution, or other executive or legislative branch agency.

The bill exempts DORS from its requirements if the department needs interpreting services related to an internal matter and the use of department interpreters may raise confidentiality issues. The bill also does not affect preexisting interpreting services contracts.

By law, anyone who receives compensation for providing interpreting services or provides the services as part of his or her job duties must be registered with DORS and meet certain qualification requirements (CGS § 46a-33a). The bill specifies that interpreting services provided by state agencies must comply with this law.

*House Amendment "A" (1) applies the bill's requirements to a narrower category of state agencies, (2) specifies that the bill affects no preexisting interpreting services contracts, and (3) makes a minor change regarding when an agency may obtain services outside of DORS.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2015

BACKGROUND

DORS Interpreting Services

By law, DORS must provide interpreting services, to the extent providers of interpreting services are available, if requested by any person or public or private entity. Service recipients must reimburse DORS through rates set by the department's commissioner (CGS § 46a-33b).

Related Bill

sHB 6765, File 411, reported favorably by the Human Services and Education committees, (1) alters the definition of interpreting; (2) creates new interpreter qualification requirements for educational settings; and (3) updates, increases, or otherwise changes interpreter qualification requirements in other settings.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 18 Nay 0 (03/19/2015)