

Flynn, Eileen

From: Doreen <jenand43@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 7:24 PM
To: HSTestimony
Subject: Raised Bill 6765

To Legislative Human Services Committee regarding Raised Bill 6765:

My name is Doreen Simons, I am Deaf, not only do I use interpreters but I am a Certified Deaf Interpreter. In one of my positions over the years I have evaluated interpreters for certification in New York City, Newfoundland, Canada, Hartford, Connecticut and Boston, Massachusetts. I have been teaching Deaf Studies since 1973 in different universities and presently I am teaching full time at UCONN in Storrs. I am also employed at FSW (Family Services Woodfield) as per diem deaf interpreter working along side with hearing interpreters in the court and medical settings over 10 years now.

I am confused about Bill 6765 because I was expecting to see qualifications of interpreters to be raised but noted that in the legal section of the bill certain certificates were lowered. I believe we should not be lowering any certificate levels especially in legal settings. As to the Educational portion of the bill: I am aware that in Bill 6765 it requires Educational Interpreters to have certain interpreting requirements. The problem is that Educational Interpreters have other job duties so we are not talking about just interpreting to match the requirement of the IEP process for that particular deaf child. The educational interpreters have titles i.e. interpreter/tutor/aide etc. When I was a Rehabilitation Counselor I had a secretary/interpreter and her duties were not exclusively interpreting and this is true in the school setting as well. Educational Interpreters have to have other educational skills besides interpreting i.e. working with special needs, tutoring etc. not just interpreting skills. At the college level, is where you mainly see only interpreting skill without other duties. In my opinion we need to defer to the IEP requirements for the deaf child. Parents have the right to make a decision about their child's education not this Bill 6765. I know this from a professional and personal perspective, as a Deaf Educator as well as a parent of a deaf child. In both perspectives respect must be given to the child's preference of communication as well as other educational supports.

I understand that the Department of Rehabilitation Service will plan to set up the Board for monitoring interpreters in Connecticut, but I am wondering if they plan to train the Board on how to do this evaluation of interpreters. In addition, the Board must be neutral in order to avoid favoritism. R.I.D has had the responsibility to evaluate, license and deal with discipline of interpreters and RID has a grievance and evaluation process in place. So what is the purpose of the Board when we have RID?

I have had wonderful interpreting services not only for myself and for my family over the years. I think very highly of the quality of interpreters we have in this state.

In conclusion, I think more flexibility should be worked in on the Educational portion of the bill to respect the IEP process and the Legal interpreting standards should go back to the original level prior to the lowering of standards that is in this bill now.

Thank you.

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