



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE
STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT
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Bill Number: S. 0548 Introduced on March 14, 2017
Author: Shealy
Subject: Sign Language Interpreters Act
Requestor: Senate Labor, Commerce, and Industry
RFA Analyst(s): Shuford and Wren
Impact Date: May 8, 2017

Estimate of Fiscal Impact

	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19
State Expenditure		
General Fund	Undetermined	\$0
Other and Federal	Undetermined	\$0
Full-Time Equivalent Position(s)	Undetermined	0.00
State Revenue		
General Fund	\$0	\$0
Other and Federal	Undetermined	\$0
Local Expenditure	Undetermined	\$0
Local Revenue	\$0	\$0

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill may increase Other Funds expenses of the Department of Transportation by \$79,000 for an additional FTE, travel, and supplies if the agency is required to employ a full-time sign language interpreter. The bill may increase General Fund, Other Funds, and Federal Funds expenses for other agencies, but the amount of increase is undetermined. The increase in Other Funds revenue for the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (LLR) as a result of registration fees for sign language interpreters is undetermined since the registration fee and the number of individuals who will register as interpreters are undetermined. However, the revenue must be used by LLR to defray the expenses associated with the requirements of this bill. The increase in expenses for local governments is undetermined.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on March 14, 2017

State Expenditure

This bill creates the Sign Language Interpreters Act. The bill imposes certain requirements for sign language interpreters used by all departments of state government as listed in Section 1-30-10, offices of statewide constitutional officers, the Judicial Department, all public institutions of higher education, the Commission on Higher Education, police stations, county and state detention centers and correctional facilities, and any other board, commission, or council created by a statute of this state. Additionally, the bill requires LLR to develop and maintain a website and database of all sign language interpreters who are required to register with the department. LLR may charge a nominal registration fee for individuals seeking to register as a sign language interpreter with the department. The registration fees must be used by LLR to defray expenses

associated with the requirements of this bill. LLR has no obligation to verify the credentials of a person registering with the department and may not investigate complaints of misconduct by a person registered with the department. Additionally, LLR may not impose discipline for misconduct as related to the requirements of this bill.

Department of Transportation. The agency indicates that this bill will increase recurring Other Funds expenses by approximately \$79,000 if the agency is required to employ a sign language interpreter on staff. This expense is based upon an average salary of \$50,000, employee benefits of \$22,000, and \$7,000 for supplies and travel.

Department of Motor Vehicles. The agency currently pays \$75 per hour for interpreters who are certified through the School for the Deaf and Blind. The expenditure impact to the agency is undetermined and is dependent upon any increase in interpreter fees as a result in changes to the required qualifications for interpreters.

Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services. The agency currently contracts with the School for the Deaf and Blind and South Carolina Interpreting Service for the Deaf, LLC for sign language interpreting services. The agency anticipates that costs for interpreters will increase once individuals gain the certifications and professional hours required by this bill. The expenditure impact to the agency is undetermined and is dependent upon any increase in interpreter fees as a result of changes to the qualification requirements.

The following agencies indicate that they do not use sign language interpreters. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact to these agencies.

Comptroller General's Office
Department of Commerce
Department of Juvenile Justice
Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities
Legislative Council
Office of the Adjutant General
South Carolina Senate
State Treasurer's Office

The following agencies indicate that this bill will have no expenditure impact or a minimal impact, which can be managed within existing appropriations.

Commission on Higher Education
Department of Administration
Department of Agriculture
Department of Disabilities and Special Needs
Department of Employment and Workforce
Department of Health and Environmental Control
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Insurance
Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

Department of Mental Health
Department of Natural Resources
Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism
Department of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services
Department of Public Safety
Department of Revenue
Judicial Department
Lieutenant Governor's Office
Secretary of State
State Department of Education
Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
College of Charleston
Francis Marion University
Lander University
South Carolina State University
South Carolina Technical College System
The Citadel
University of South Carolina
Winthrop University

The following agencies were surveyed, but responses have not been received.

Area Health Education Consortium
Attorney General's Office
Department of Corrections
Department of Social Services
Governor's School for Science and Mathematics
House of Representatives
John de la Howe School
Medical University of South Carolina
Ports Authority
Public Service Authority
School for the Deaf and Blind

State Revenue

This bill authorizes LLR to charge a nominal registration fee for individuals seeking to register as a sign language interpreter with the department. The registration fees must be used by LLR to defray expenses associated with the requirements of this bill. The number of individuals who will meet the requirements of this bill and register as a sign language interpreter are undetermined. Additionally, the registration fee to be charged by LLR is undetermined. Therefore, any increase in revenue to LLR is undetermined.

Local Expenditure

The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office contacted twenty-three county governments regarding the expenditure impact of this bill and received no responses. Therefore, the expenditure impact of this bill on local governments is undetermined.

Local Revenue

N/A



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director