

## HB 3206 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Human Services and Housing

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**Action Date:** 04/08/19

**Action:** Do pass and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference

**Vote:** 9-0-0-0

**Yeas:** 9 - Helt, Keny-Guyer, Meek, Mitchell, Noble, Sanchez, Schouten, Williams, Zika

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

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**Meeting Dates:** 3/25, 4/8

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#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Defines "preferred communication mode" and "support service provider." Requires Department of Human Services (DHS) to administer a program to make support service providers available to individuals who are deaf-blind including visual and environmental information; sighted guide services; and communication accessible in the deaf-blind person's preferred language and communication mode. Requires DHS to adopt rules to administer the program including professional training and establishing a pay rate for support service providers. Requires DHS to provide technical assistance funding for training support service providers. Requires DHS to convene a stakeholder advisory committee. Allows DHS to accept gifts, grants, or contributions for the program.

#### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- It is difficult for deaf-blind individuals to have autonomy, and do what they want to do, when they would like to do it
- Deaf-blind individuals need assistance with everyday activities like going to the grocery store, getting a hair cut, taking a walk, reading the mail, or voting
- A support service provider (SSP) communicates visual information, such as reading labels on cans or communicating about surroundings
- A SSP is a professional who can maintain confidentiality, and help individuals who are deaf-blind integrate into the community
- Ability to move around your surroundings without being afraid is a privilege
- Many other states provide this service
- Individuals who are deaf-blind are unable to participate when they attend events, such as sporting or professional networking events

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

#### BACKGROUND:

The primary purpose of a support service provider (SSP) is to empower the deaf-blind person to make his or her own decisions. SSPs are specially trained individuals who provide access to the community, providing visual, environmental, and social information, and communication facilitation. A few states that have SSP programs are New Jersey, Minnesota, and Washington, but for some states, the services are only available in specific cities.