

HB 3264 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rules

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Legislative Assembly to provide translator and interpreter services free of charge in order to facilitate witness participation in committee hearings; facilitate dialogue in informal meetings with one or more members; as required by federal Americans with Disabilities Act; or for constituent outreach activities. Requires verbal or written requests for services to be made to Legislative Administrator by specified date for translator and interpreter services. Requires Legislative Administrator, upon request of member of Legislative Assembly, to provide translator or interpreter services for specified types of written material. Requires each Senator and Representative to develop language access plan for their offices to address communication of critical legislative information to limited English proficiency constituents. Specifies factors to be incorporated into each plan and requires Legislative Administrator to provide technical assistance to develop and implement plan. Requires members to determine implementation methods, including hiring bilingual or multilingual staff; relying on Legislative Assembly translator and interpreter services; and contracting with one or more third-party language service providers. Appropriates General Fund moneys to Legislative Administration Committee to fund translator and interpreter services and language access plan development. Takes effect 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Requires interpreter services provided during legislative proceedings to be simultaneous to the proceedings, occurring at the time the proceeding is taking place.

BACKGROUND:

A legislative workgroup on language access services formed in November of 2020. The group identified its goal to ensure meaningful access to the legislative process for limited English proficiency Oregonians; to provide a single point of contact for language access services; and to prioritize the following language access services:

- oral interpretation for testifying in committees;
- oral interpretation for answering constituent queries;
- oral interpretation for meetings with legislators;
- written translation for website materials, including meeting agendas, information about bills, and instructions for how to engage with the process; and
- signage for wayfinding at the Capitol.

House Bill 2944 requires the Legislative Assembly to provide translator and interpreter services free of charge in order to facilitate witness participation in committee hearings; facilitate dialogue in informal meetings with one or more members; to comply with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act; or for constituent outreach activities. The measure also requires each Senator and Representative to develop and implement a language access plan to address communication of critical legislative information to limited English proficiency constituents.