
Human Services & Early Learning Committee

SB 5558

Brief Description: Reinstating the authority of the department of social and health services and the health care authority to purchase interpreter services for applicants and recipients of public assistance who are sensory-impaired.

Sponsors: Senators Saldaña, Darneille, Keiser and Nguyen.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinstates the authority of the Department of Social and Health Services and the Health Care Authority to purchase interpreter services on behalf of applicants and recipients of public assistance who are sensory-impaired.

Hearing Date: 3/19/19

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

Background:

The Department of Enterprise Services (DES) adopts policies and procedures for the management of contracts by state agencies and enters into master contracts that may be used by state and local agencies for various activities, including procuring goods and services.

In 2011 state procurement responsibilities were consolidated in the DES. When that consolidation occurred, a number of exemptions were allowed for certain purchasing activities. Among those exemptions was authority for the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the Health Care Authority (HCA) to purchase interpreter services on behalf of limited-English speaking or sensory-impaired applicants and recipients of public assistance.

In 2018 legislation was enacted to centralize the procurement of spoken language interpreter services and allow collective bargaining representation for spoken language interpreters. The

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enacted legislation removed the authority of the DSHS and the HCA to purchase interpreter services on behalf of limited-English speaking or sensory-impaired applicants and recipients of public assistance.

Summary of Bill:

The DSHS and the HCA are authorized to purchase interpreter services on behalf of applicants and recipients of public assistance who are sensory-impaired.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.