

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5558

As Reported by House Committee On:
Human Services & Early Learning

Title: An act relating to 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.

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.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Human Services & Early Learning: 3/19/19, 3/22/19 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- 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.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & EARLY LEARNING

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Callan, Vice Chair; Frame, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Eslick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Goodman, Griffey, Kilduff, Klippert, Lovick and Ortiz-Self.

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.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

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 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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The intent last session was not to touch the sensory-impaired communities' purchasing authority, and the change last year being remedied by this bill was an unintended consequence. The DSHS interpreted last year's legislation as removing their authority, and this bill clarifies that authority.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senators Saldaña, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.