

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.S.B. 1230
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Jurisprudence
4/19/2007
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Justice of the peace courts have criminal jurisdiction in traffic and other misdemeanor cases where the punishment only consists of a fine, and civil jurisdiction where the claim for monetary damages or the amount in dispute is not more than \$5,000. In these courts, the volume of cases is typically high, more than 600,000 per year in some cases. Due to the demographics of the jurisdiction of many of these courts, court interpreters are often overloaded with defendants speaking another language, particularly Spanish. Clerks of justice of the peace courts rarely need to possess the skills to interpret highly technical legal language for non-English speaking defendants.

C.S.S.B. 1230 requires the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation to adopt rules that prescribe qualification requirements to obtain an interpreter's license that include a basic designation or a master designation.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation in SECTION 2 (Section 57.043, Government Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 57.002, Government Code, by adding Subsection (f), as follows:

(f) Requires a licensed court interpreter appointed by a court under Subsection (a) or (b) to hold a license that includes the appropriate designation under Section 57.043(d) that indicates the interpreter is permitted to interpret in that court.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 57.043, Government Code, by adding Subsections (d) and (e), as follows:

(d) Requires a license issued under this subchapter (Subchapter C. Court Interpreters for Individuals Who Do Not Communicate in English) to include at least one of certain designations.

(e) Requires the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation, in adopting rules relating to licensing under this subchapter, to prescribe the qualifications required for a license that includes a basic designation and for a license that includes a master designation.

SECTION 3. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2007.