



Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

FISCAL NOTE

Drafting Number: LLS 19-0410
Prime Sponsors: Rep. Jackson, Sen. Danielson

Date: January 24, 2019
Bill Status: House Health & Insurance
Fiscal Analyst: Aaron Carpenter | 303-866-4918, Aaron.Carpenter@state.co.us

Bill Topic: SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS TITLE CERTIFICATION

- Summary of Fiscal Impact: State Revenue (minimal), State Expenditure, State Transfer, TABOR Refund, Local Government, Statutory Public Entity

This bill allows the Colorado Commission of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind to approve certifications for sign language interpreters and adds additional titles that cannot be used without a certification. Starting in FY 2019-20, the bill will increase state revenue and expenditures on an ongoing basis.

Appropriation Summary: The bill requires a \$19,440 cash fund appropriation in FY 2019-20 only.

Fiscal Note Status: This fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under HB 19-1069

Table with 3 columns: Category, FY 2019-20, FY 2020-21. Rows include Revenue, Expenditures (Cash Funds), Transfers, and TABOR Refund.

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, anyone who claims to be a sign language interpreter and does not hold a valid certification issued by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., engages in a deceptive trade practice. This bill expands the titles that a person cannot use without a certification to include "translator" and "certified translator". In addition, the bill allows the Colorado Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind to approve certifications for sign language interpreters to allow them to use the specified titles.

Background

The Colorado Commission of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind, in the Department of Human Services (DHS), is responsible for ensuring equal access to government services for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind in Colorado. In FY 2018-19, the commission was appropriated \$2.1 million, including \$1.9 million from the Telephone Users with Disabilities Fund and \$144,324 from the General Fund.

State Revenue

Starting in FY 2019-20, state revenue to the Judicial Department will be affected to the extent there is a change in civil court filings for deceptive trade practices. Because the bill adds new titles that cannot be used without certification, cases for deceptive trade practices may increase. However, by allowing the commission to approve certifications, more people may be able to get certified, decreasing the number of cases filed. The fiscal note assumes that any revenue change will be minimal.

State Expenditures

In FY 2019-20, expenditures in the Judicial Department and the DHS will be impacted as described below.

Department of Human Services. Starting in FY 2019-20, cash fund expenditures from the Telephone Users with Disabilities Fund in the Department of Regulatory Agencies reappropriated to the DHS will increase by \$19,440 for the commission to approve certifications. Based on a similar project performed in Idaho, the fiscal note assumes that a contract subject matter expert will assist the commission in reviewing certifications. There will be approximately 27 certification approvals taking, on average, 9 hours each to assess, at a contractor rate of \$80 per hour.

Judicial Department. Starting in FY 2019-20, workload in the trial courts in the Judicial Department will be impacted based on any change in the number of cases filed for deceptive trade practices. The fiscal note assumes that any impact to trial courts will be minimal and does not require a change in appropriations.

TABOR refunds. To the extent that the bill increases court case filings, the state General Fund obligations for TABOR refunds in FY 2019-20 will increase. To the extent that the bill decreases court case filings, the state General Fund obligations for TABOR refunds in FY 2019-20 will decrease. Under current law and the Legislative Council Staff December 2018 forecast, the bill will correspondingly change the amount refunded to taxpayers via sales tax refunds on income tax returns for tax year 2020. The state is not expected to collect a TABOR surplus in FY 2020-21.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect August 2, 2019, if the General Assembly adjourns on May 3, 2019, as scheduled, and no referendum petition is filed.

State Appropriations

In FY 2019-20, the bill requires an appropriation of \$19,440 from the Telephone Users with Disabilities Cash Fund in the Department of Regulatory Agencies and reappropriated to the Department of Human Services.

State and Local Government Contacts

District Attorneys
Judicial

Higher Education
Law

Human Services
Personnel

Information Technology
Regulatory Agencies