SB 270 and HB 1049 Establish Meaningfully Accessible Language Services at All State Agencies to All Virginians

SB 270 and HB 1049 establish basic principles for all Virginians--whether Limited English Proficient or people whose disabilities affect their communications--to be able to have meaningful access to state agency services. These bills are funded through Budget Amendments and require the Secretary of Administration to:

- Establish criteria for the procurement of language interpretation and translation services by state agencies and

- Determine qualifications of and compensation for state employees who are multilingual and whose job requires interpretation, translation, or other bilingual skills at least once a month.

SB 270 and HB 1049 create the Interagency Language Access Working Group that shall:

1. Establish and maintain a model language access policy for all state agencies to use;

2. Develop and update a glossary of common terms used by state agencies and translated into at least 10 of the most frequently spoken non-English languages in the Commonwealth;

3. Work with each state agency’s Language Access Coordinator to track progress being made by each state agency in ensuring language access for the public;

4. Recommend policy changes, review the Code of Virginia, and identify funding and resources in order to meet individuals’ language access needs; and

5. Submit an annual report (with delineated components) to the Governor and the General Assembly by November 1st of each year, covering the prior fiscal year.

- The bills require each agency to designate a Language Access Coordinator who will be responsible for developing and implementing the agency’s language access policy and preparing the agency’s annual language access report and

- Ensure, as a matter of policy, that all Virginians have meaningful access to programs, services, and activities of state agencies regardless of English proficiency or disabilities that affect their communications.

See other side for a List of Organizations Supporting SB 270/HB 1049
Organizations Supporting SB 270/HB 1049 (as of 1/24/2022)