SENATE DOCKET, NO. 870 FILED ON: 1/17/2013

SENATE . . . . . No. 238

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patricia D. Jehlen

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act regarding sign language proficiency for certain teachers and educational interpreters.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
Patricia D. Jehlen	*Second Middlesex*
David M. Rogers	*24th Middlesex*
Benjamin Swan	*11th Hampden*
John W. Scibak	*2nd Hampshire*

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SENATE . . . . . No. 238

By Ms. Jehlen, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 238) of Patricia D. Jehlen, David M. Rogers, Benjamin Swan and John W. Scibak for legislation to regard sign language proficiency for certain teachers and educational interpreters. Education.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

An Act regarding sign language proficiency for certain teachers and educational interpreters.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 198 the following section:- Section 198A. The commission shall determine or develop an assessment for communication proficiency in Sign Language for teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing: ASL/Total Communication. The commission shall also determine or develop an assessment for interpreting proficiency in sign language for educational interpreters who use sign language with students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

SECTION 2. Section 38G of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “successor”, in line 246, the following two paragraphs:-

On or before June 30, 2014 and subject to appropriation, proficiency in sign language shall be a requirement for certification as a teacher of students who are deaf or hard of hearing: American Sign Language/Total Communication. Proficiency in sign language shall be verified through a communication proficiency assessment determined or developed by the commission for the deaf and hard of hearing and approved by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education.

By June 2014, the commission for the deaf and hard of hearing and the department of elementary and secondary education shall jointly develop a timetable for the assessment of registered educational interpreter’s proficiency in sign language interpretation and shall report on the timetable to the Joint Committee on Education. The method of assessment of educational

21 interpreter proficiency shall be approved and administered by the commission for the deaf and
22 hard of hearing and approved by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education.