SENATE . . . . . No. 2248

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)

SENATE, Thursday, April 28, 2016

The committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure to whom was referred the petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 204) of James T. Welch for legislation to protect consumers of sign language and oral interpretation and transliteration,- reports the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 2248).

For the committee,
Barbara A. L'Italien

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An Act protecting consumers of sign language and oral interpretation and transliteration.

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. Section 191 of chapter 6 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph at the end thereof:-

"Qualified interpreter," a person skilled in sign language or oral interpretation and transliteration, has the ability to communicate accurately with a deaf or hard of hearing person and is able to translate information to and from such person. The Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall establish the standards by which interpreters shall be determined to be qualified. Only those interpreters who meet the established standards and who are registered as qualified by the commission shall be presumed to be qualified to provide communication access on behalf of deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the Commonwealth.

SECTION 2. Section 196 of said chapter 6 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after the word “emergencies.” in line 3, the following sentence:-

“Only interpreters registered by the commission shall be presumed to be qualified interpreters within the Commonwealth as defined in section 191 of this Chapter, however, during

14 an emergency situation, after a bona fide attempt has been made to obtain a qualified interpreter,

15 a hospital or emergency service provider may use Video Remote Interpreting or a family

16 member to facilitate emergency interpreting service only until a qualified interpreter arrives on

17 site ."

18 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect immediately upon enactment.