

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
79R10437 RMB-D

H.B. 1642
By: Hartnett (Harris)
Jurisprudence
5/6/2005
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Chapter 57 (Court Interpreters), Government Code, requires counties with a population greater than 50,000 to use licensed court interpreters. Licensed interpreters of the many languages spoken in the state are not always locally available. Finding, hiring, and paying for a licensed interpreter can be a large expense for a county.

H.B. 1642 amends Chapter 57, Government Code, to allow a trial judge in a large county to use judicial discretion in certain circumstances to determine when a licensed court interpreter is required. If a licensed interpreter is not available locally, the judge may certify an interpreter that the judge determines is competent to perform the interpretation duties.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 57.002, Government Code, by amending Subsection (c) and adding Subsections (d) and (e), as follows:

(e) Authorizes a court, subject to Subsection (e), in a county with a population of less than 50,000, to appoint a spoken language interpreter who is not a certified or licensed court interpreter.

(d) Authorizes a court, subject to Subsection (e), in a county with a population of 50,000 or more, to appoint a spoken language interpreter who is not a certified or licensed court interpreter if certain conditions are present.

(e) Creates this subsection from existing text. Requires a person appointed under Subsection (c) or (d) to meet certain criteria.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2005.