

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
86R21277 MAW-F

C.S.S.B. 281
By: Zaffirini
Administration
4/15/2019
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Terms that use the word "impaired," such as "hearing impaired" or "auditory impairment," imply that persons who are deaf inherently are diminished and perpetuate stereotypes that such persons are less competent and capable. What's more, the use of such terms is incompatible with existing law that requires the use of person-first, respectful language.

S.B. 281 directs the legislature and the Texas Legislative Council to avoid using the terms "hearing impaired," "hearing loss," "auditory impairment," and "speech impaired," when drafting future legislation and to replace such terms with specific alternatives as necessary when amending existing statutes. This will ensure that persons who are deaf or hard of hearing are respectfully referenced in Texas statutes. (Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 281 amends current law relating to the use of certain language regarding a person who is deaf or hard of hearing in statutes or resolutions.

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 392.002, Government Code, by adding Subsection (b-1) to provide that in addition to the terms and phrases listed in Subsection (a), the legislature and the Texas Legislative Council (TLC) are directed to avoid using in any new statute or resolution "hearing impaired," "auditory impairment," and "speech impaired" in reference to a deaf or hard of hearing person, and the legislature and TLC are directed to replace, when enacting or revising a statute or resolution, those phrases with "deaf" or "hard of hearing" as appropriate.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2019.