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THIRD READING

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Bill No: AB 413  
Author: Fong (D)  
Introduced: 2/4/25  
Vote: 21

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SENATE HOUSING COMMITTEE: 9-0, 6/17/25

AYES: Wahab, Seyarto, Arreguín, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cortese, Durazo,  
Grayson, Ochoa Bogh

NO VOTE RECORDED: Gonzalez, Padilla

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/29/25

AYES: Caballero, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 79-0, 6/2/25 - See last page for vote

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**SUBJECT:** Department of Housing and Community Development: guidelines:  
translation

**SOURCE:** California YIMBY

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**DIGEST:** This bill requires the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to translate all guidelines which explain rights or services available to the public into any non-English languages spoken by a substantial number of non-English-speaking people, as defined.

**ANALYSIS:**

Existing law:

- 1) Requires HCD to provide bilingual staff for department services to make available department publications in a language other than English when necessary to effectively serve groups for which the services or publications are made available.

- 2) Defines “a substantial number of non-English speaking people” as members of a group who either do not speak English or are unable to effectively communicate in English because it is not their native language, and who comprise 5% or more of the people served by the state agency or any of its local offices or facilities.

This bill requires HCD to review its publications to determine which ones explain rights or services available to the public, and to translate any guidelines meeting that determination into any non-English languages spoken by a substantial number of non-English-speaking people, as defined by existing law.

## **Background**

*HCD's role.* HCD administers a variety of programs to meet a large range of housing needs, including emergency shelters, affordable rental housing, and affordable homeownership. As a general rule, HCD administers programs that receive money from the state's General Fund, either directly through the budget or indirectly from general obligation bonds. In addition, HCD allocates certain federal funds, such as the HOME Program and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, for smaller jurisdictions that do not receive these funds directly from the federal government.

HCD awards loans and grants to public and private housing developers, nonprofit agencies, cities, counties, state and federal partners. This funding supports the construction, acquisition, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable rental and ownership homes, provides permanent supportive housing options as well as stable, safe shelter for those experiencing homelessness. HCD also develops housing policy, building codes, regulates factory-built and manufactured homes as well as mobile home parks.

## **Comments**

- 1) *Author's statement.* “California continues to be plagued by its housing crisis, short millions of the units needed to begin to reduce the burden of housing costs. This has contributed to homelessness, eroded our quality of life, and stifled our economy. Recent changes in housing law have reduced barriers to building new units and created pathways and opportunities for households to increase their financial stability while building housing, but awareness of these changes and resources are low, especially among minorities and non-English households. California has long recognized the right of citizens to be able to

communicate with their governments, that language barriers denied citizens of rights and benefits to which they would otherwise be entitled, and declared that we should provide for effective communication with people who are precluded from utilizing public services because of language barriers. To continue to make progress in our housing efforts and access to public information, AB 413 requires the Housing and Community Development Department evaluate its publications and translate materials as required under the law. AB 413 delivers language justice in addition to economic justice while tackling one of our state's greatest crises.”

- 2) *Threshold languages.* According to the U.S. Census Bureau, roughly 44% of Californians speak a language other than English at home; within the Medi-Cal population, roughly 38% speak a language other than English as their primary spoken language. The most frequently reported languages among Medi-Cal's non-English speakers are Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Armenian. More than 200 languages are spoken in California.

The Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act (Chapter 1182, Statutes of 1973), states legislative intent to provide effective communication between the government and people who may be prevented by language barriers from using public services. The Act requires all state agencies that are directly engaged in providing information and/or services to a “substantial number” of non-English-speaking individuals to ensure that information and services are provided in English. This requirement includes translating certain materials into any non-English language spoken by a substantial number of the public served by the agency, defined as members of a group “who either do not speak English, or who are unable to effectively communicate in English because it is not their native language, and who comprise five percent or more of the people served by the statewide or any local office or facility of a state agency.” The languages in which materials and information must be provided to meet the standards of the Act, or similar requirements, are often referred to as “threshold languages.”

- 3) *HCD language assistance.* The main users of HCD programs are local governments and affordable housing developers. In a few cases, however, HCD provides guidance to the public on rights and services. HCD provides free services, including qualified interpreters and information in other languages, to people whose primary language is not English.<sup>1</sup> HCD also published a *Language Action Plan* in 2022, designed to help department staff

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<sup>1</sup> [Language Access | California Department of Housing and Community Development](#)

“improve access to critical services or activities for customers who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) and for persons who have disabilities.”<sup>2</sup>

Although HCD posted the *ADU Handbook*<sup>3</sup> on its website in four non-English languages in January 2025, the author notes that not all of HCD’s public-facing handbooks have been translated into non-English languages. For example, the *SB 9 Fact Sheet*<sup>4</sup>, the *Advisory for Manufactured Home Roof Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Systems*<sup>5</sup>, and the *Manufactured Home Recovery Fund Fact Sheet*<sup>6</sup> are only easily available in English.

This bill would require HCD to review all of its guidelines to determine which explain rights or services available to the public, and to translate all guidelines meeting that criteria into any non-English languages spoken by a substantial number on non-English-speaking people.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- HCD estimates one-time contracting costs of approximately \$200,000 to \$300,000 to translate all guidelines, handbooks, forms, and other technical materials that are generally used by the public. HCD would also incur unknown ongoing costs to translate additional guidelines and documents that are adopted in the future that explain rights or services available to the public. The magnitude of these costs would depend on the volume of documents that require translation each year. (General Fund)

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 8/29/25)

California Yimby (Source)  
 California Community Builders  
 California Democratic Renters Council  
 City Heights CDC  
 East Bay Yimby  
 Florence-firestone Community Organization  
 Freemont for Everyone

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<sup>2</sup> [Language Access Plan \(ca.gov\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Accessory Dwelling Units | California Department of Housing and Community Development](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Accountability and Enforcement | California Department of Housing and Community Development](#)

<sup>5</sup> [ADVISORY FOR MANUFACTURED HOME ROOF MOUNTED SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS \(ca.gov\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Mobilehome Assistance Center | California Department of Housing and Community Development](#)

Fremont for Everyone  
Grow the Richmond  
House Sacramento  
Mountain View Yimby  
Napa-solano for Everyone  
New Way Homes  
Northern Neighbors  
Pathway to Tomorrow  
Peninsula for Everyone  
Power CA Action  
Redlands Yimby  
San Diego Housing Commission  
Santa Cruz Yimby  
Santa Rosa Yimby  
SF Yimby  
Sloco Yimby  
South Bay Yimby  
Student Homes Coalition  
Ventura County Yimby  
Westside for Everyone  
Yimby Action

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 8/29/25)

None received

**ASSEMBLY FLOOR:** 79-0, 6/2/25

**AYES:** Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca

Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta,  
Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

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8/29/25 20:33:30

**\*\*\*\* END \*\*\*\***