
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT AND RETIREMENT
Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	AB 792	Hearing Date:	July 9, 2025
Author:	Lee		
Version:	June 12, 2025		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Glenn Miles		

SUBJECT: Court interpreters

KEY ISSUE

This bill permits the trial court interpreters' union to request multiregional bargaining between the union and the regional court interpreter employment relations committees subject to the mutual consent of the parties.

ANALYSIS

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Trial Court Interpreter Employment and Labor Relations Act (TCIELRA), which provides for public employer-employee relations between trial courts and court interpreters. (Government Code §§71800 et seq.)
- 2) Defines the following relevant terms:
 - a. "Certified interpreter" and "registered interpreter" are persons certified or registered to provide language translation services, not including sign language.
 - b. "Employee organization" means a labor organization that has as one of its purposes representing employees in their relations with the trial courts.
 - c. "Local compensation" means any amounts paid to employee interpreters by an individual trial court that are not paid pursuant to the regional memorandum of understanding and are not calculated on an hourly basis.
 - d. "Recognized employee organization" means an employee organization that has been formally acknowledged to represent the court interpreters employed by the trial courts in a region.
 - e. "Regional court interpreter employment relations committee" means one of the four regional court interpreter committees established by statute and subject to rules adopted by the Judicial Council. (Government Code §§71801, 71807)
- 3) Divides the trial courts into four regions, for purposes of developing regional terms and conditions of employment and for collective bargaining with recognized employee organizations, with each region controlled by a regional court interpreter employment relations committee, as follows:
 - a. Region 1: Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties.
 - b. Region 2: the counties in the First and Sixth Appellate Districts, except Solano County.
 - c. Region 3: the counties in the Third and Fifth Appellate Districts.
 - d. Region 4: the counties in the Fourth Appellate District. (Government Code §71807)

- 4) Permits trial courts in a region to employ certified and registered interpreters to perform spoken language interpretation for the trial courts in full-time, part-time, or intermittent, part-time interpreter positions created by the trial courts, and establishes an order of priority for hiring. (Government Code §71806)
- 5) Provides that the regional court interpreter relations committee shall set terms and conditions of employment for court interpreters within the region, including, but not limited to, hourly rates of pay, subject to a meet and confer in good faith; when the terms and conditions of employment are adopted by the regional court interpreter relations committee, they shall be binding on the trial courts; unless otherwise provided in a memorandum of understanding or agreement with a recognized employee organization, other terms and conditions of employment shall be uniform throughout the region, except that health and welfare and pension benefits may be the same as those provided to other employees of the same trial court. (Government Code §71808(a))
- 6) Provides that trial courts may set additional local compensation, subject to requirements to meet and confer in good faith between the trial court and the recognized employee organization; an agreement establishing local compensation shall be between the trial court and the recognized employee organization, and shall not modify the terms of a regional memorandum of understanding or agreement between the regional court interpreter employment relations committee and the recognized employee organization. (Government Code §71808(b))

This bill:

- 1) Authorizes a recognized employee organization to request a multiregional bargaining if more than one region is bargaining in a calendar year and subject to the mutual consent of the recognized employee organization and the regional court interpreter employment relations committee.

COMMENTS**1. Need for this bill?**

According to the author:

“Current law does not allow consolidated multi-region bargaining to occur for court interpreters, which has led to prolonged negotiations and delayed contract resolution. As a result, recruitment and retention has been difficult, and both the courts as employers and the employee representative organization have not been able to focus on meet workforce challenges.”

2. Proponent Arguments

According to the California Federation of Interpreters, Local 39000:

“AB 792 fixes one shortcoming of the California Interpreter Act as it pertains to collective bargaining. Under current law, California is divided into four regions for purposes of negotiating union contracts, each with regional teams appointed from local courts, to negotiate terms of a contract. However, often times these negotiations are prolonged, delaying resolution. At times, this delay is extended such that multiple regions are required to

bargain simultaneously. However, current law does not allow for combined bargaining sessions which would provide a more efficient mechanism to resolve these labor negotiations. It is important to note that such an approach is supported by the existing funding mechanism. Local courts are ultimately not responsible for funding court interpreters – they pay for these services and then have these payments reimbursed out of the state general fund dollar for dollar. So, in the end the state budget is the source of all interpreter funding. Thus, a multi-regional approach is not hampered by local budget decisions, as all funding will be allocated by the Legislature which has never reduced the line item for interpreters.

The more efficiently the courts can reach collective bargaining agreements, the more the courts and union focus time and energy on recruiting individuals to this workforce.”

3. Opponent Arguments:

None received.

4. Prior Legislation:

AB 1032 (Pacheco, Chapter 556, Statutes of 2023) made various changes to the Trial Court Interpreter Employment and Labor Relations Act (TCIELRA), a statutory framework governing employer-employee relations between trial courts and court interpreters

SB 818 (Escutia, Chapter 257, Statutes of 2003) made technical, non-substantive, and other clean-up changes to TCIELRA.

SB 371 (Escutia, Chapter 1047, Statutes 2002) established TCIELRA which sets forth provisions and procedures governing the employment and compensation of certified and registered trial court interpreters, and court interpreters pro tempore, employed by the trial courts, as specified.

SUPPORT

California Federation of Interpreters, Local 39000 (Sponsor)

OPPOSITION

None received.

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