
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 792
Author: Lee (D)
Amended: 6/12/25 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: 11-0, 6/24/25
AYES: Umberg, Allen, Arreguín, Ashby, Caballero, Durazo, Laird, Stern, Wahab,
Weber Pierson, Wiener
NO VOTE RECORDED: Niello, Valladares

SENATE LABOR, PUB. EMP. & RET. COMMITTEE: 4-1, 7/9/25
AYES: Smallwood-Cuevas, Cortese, Durazo, Laird
NOES: Strickland

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 61-5, 4/28/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Court interpreters

SOURCE: California Federation of Interpreters, Local 39000

DIGEST: This bill permits multiregional bargaining between the regional court interpreter employment relations committees and recognized court interpreter employee organizations with 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 (Gov. Code), tit. 8, ch. 7.5, §§ 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. (Gov. 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. (Gov. 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. (Gov. 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. (Gov. Code, § 71808(a).)
- 6) Provides that, notwithstanding 5), trial courts may set additional local compensation, subject 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. (Gov. Code, § 71808(b).)

This bill:

- 1) Permits, when more than one region is bargaining in calendar year, a recognized employee organization to request multiregional bargaining.
- 2) Permits the request for multiregional bargaining in 1) to be granted with the mutual consent of the recognized employee organization and the regional court interpreter employment relations committee.

Comments

The TCIELRA governs when and how courts may hire spoken-language interpreters or engage independent contractor interpreters to provide translation services in court proceedings. Among other things, the TCIELRA divides the state's counties into four regions; each region is represented by a regional court interpreter relations committee, established pursuant to rules adopted by the Judicial Council, which sets the terms and conditions for employment for court reporters within the region through the meet-and-confer process with the recognized employee organizations representing the employee-interpreters.

This bill would permit multiregional bargaining under the TCIELRA when (1) more than one region is bargaining in the same calendar year, and (2) the recognized employee organizations and the regional court interpreter employment relations committees give their consent. This option of multiregional bargaining is intended to increase efficiency in the bargaining process and, ideally, make it easier for the courts to retain much-needed employee-interpreters.

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

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/18/25)

California Federation of Interpreters, Local 39000 (source)

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/18/25)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: 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.

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 61-5, 4/28/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza,

Carrillo, Connolly, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: Alanis, Davies, DeMaio, Macedo, Tangipa

NO VOTE RECORDED: Castillo, Chen, Flora, Gabriel, Gallagher, Hadwick, Haney, Hoover, Lackey, Patterson, Sanchez, Schultz, Ta

Prepared by: Allison Whitt Meredith / JUD. / (916) 651-4113
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