

SENATE BILL 991

J1

(4lr3186)

ENROLLED BILL

— Finance/Health and Government Operations —

Introduced by **Senator Lam**

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

Proofreader.

Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this

_____ day of _____ at _____ o'clock, _____ M.

President.

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Behavioral Health – Language Assistance Services Pilot Program**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Language Assistance Services Pilot Program in the
4 Behavioral Health Administration to provide grants to local behavioral health
5 authorities to reimburse behavioral health providers for language assistance
6 services for certain children, parents, and legal guardians; and generally relating to
7 the Language Assistance Services Pilot Program.

8 BY adding to

9 Article – Health – General

10 Section 10–929 to be under the new part “Part V. Language Assistance Services Pilot
11 Program”

12 Annotated Code of Maryland

13 (2023 Replacement Volume)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

Italics indicate opposite chamber/conference committee amendments.



SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Health – General

10–927. RESERVED.

10–928. RESERVED.

PART V. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES PILOT PROGRAM.

10–929.

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “PROGRAM” MEANS THE LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES PILOT PROGRAM.

(B) THERE IS A LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES PILOT PROGRAM.

(C) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO:

(1) PROVIDE MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE TO CHILDREN WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY; AND

(2) ESTABLISH A COMPETITIVE GRANT PROCESS FOR LOCAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES TO PROVIDE REIMBURSEMENT TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDERS FOR LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES, INCLUDING INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION SERVICES TO:

(i) CHILDREN WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY ACCESSING AND RECEIVING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES; AND

(ii) PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS COORDINATING THE PROVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES AND MAKING HEALTH CARE DECISIONS REGARDING THE SERVICES ON BEHALF OF A CHILD.

(D) THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM.

(E) ~~ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2024, THE~~ *THE* ADMINISTRATION SHALL ~~ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT AND ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM, INCLUDING REGULATIONS THAT ESTABLISH THE FOLLOWING~~ THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS AS PART OF ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM:

(1) A REQUIREMENT THAT A GRANTEE DOCUMENT AND REPORT:

1 **(I) THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO RECEIVED LANGUAGE**
2 **ASSISTANCE SERVICES BROKEN DOWN BY PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN;**

3 **(II) THE NUMBER OF PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS WHO**
4 **RECEIVED LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES BROKEN DOWN BY PRIMARY**
5 **LANGUAGE SPOKEN; AND**

6 **(III) THE NUMBER OF LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES THAT**
7 **WERE REIMBURSED BROKEN DOWN BY THE TYPE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICE**
8 **PROVIDED; AND**

9 **(2) A REQUIREMENT THAT, TO REQUEST AND RECEIVE A**
10 **REIMBURSEMENT FROM A PROGRAM GRANTEE, A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER MUST:**

11 **(I) BE A LICENSED AND ACCREDITED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**
12 **PROVIDER; AND**

13 **(II) HAVE A CURRENT, WRITTEN LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN**
14 **DEMONSTRATING HOW THE PROVIDER ENSURES MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO ITS**
15 **PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH**
16 **PROFICIENCY.**

17 **(F) THE LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (E)(2)(II)**
18 **OF THIS SECTION SHALL:**

19 **(1) BE PROVIDED TO THE GRANTEE IN ADDITION TO ANY REQUEST**
20 **FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES; AND**

21 **(2) INCLUDE:**

22 **(I) A SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER**
23 **WHICH THE PROVIDER MAY ENCOUNTER AN INDIVIDUAL WITH LIMITED ENGLISH**
24 **PROFICIENCY;**

25 **(II) A SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE NUMBER OR PROPORTION OF**
26 **INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY FROM EACH LANGUAGE GROUP**
27 **IN THE PROVIDER'S SERVICE AREA TO DETERMINE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE**
28 **ASSISTANCE SERVICES;**

29 **(III) THE PROVIDER'S PROCEDURE FOR IDENTIFYING AN**
30 **INDIVIDUAL'S PRIMARY LANGUAGE;**

1 (IV) THE PROVIDER'S PROCEDURE FOR PROVIDING LANGUAGE
2 ASSISTANCE SERVICES, INCLUDING ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE
3 SERVICES;

4 (V) THE PROVIDER'S PROCEDURE FOR ENSURING EFFECTIVE
5 COMMUNICATION WITH INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY IN
6 LANGUAGES ENCOUNTERED LESS FREQUENTLY;

7 (VI) THE PROVIDER'S PLAN FOR TRAINING STAFF ON THE
8 PROVIDER'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES; AND

9 (VII) THE PROVIDER'S PROCEDURE FOR PROVIDING NOTICE OF
10 LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES AT NO COST TO INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED
11 ENGLISH PROFICIENCY.

12 (G) FOR EACH OF FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026, THE GOVERNOR SHALL
13 INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$120,000 TO THE
14 PROGRAM.

15 (H) THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL AWARD, AT A MINIMUM, THREE GRANTS
16 OF \$30,000 EACH IN EACH OF FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026.

17 (I) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2025, 2026, AND 2027, THE
18 ADMINISTRATION SHALL SUBMIT TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH §
19 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY A REPORT
20 ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM THAT INCLUDES:

21 (1) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH
22 PROFICIENCY WHO RECEIVED LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES BROKEN DOWN BY
23 JURISDICTION;

24 (2) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO RECEIVED LANGUAGE
25 ASSISTANCE SERVICES BROKEN DOWN BY PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN;

26 (3) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS WHO
27 RECEIVED LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES BROKEN DOWN BY PRIMARY
28 LANGUAGE SPOKEN;

29 (4) THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE SERVICES THAT
30 WERE REIMBURSED BROKEN DOWN BY THE TYPE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICE
31 PROVIDED; AND

32 (5) THE TOTAL AMOUNT IN GRANT MONEY PROVIDED TO EACH
33 GRANTEE DURING THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING FISCAL YEAR.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
2 1, 2024. It shall remain effective for a period of 4 years and, at the end of June 30, 2028,
3 this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and
4 of no further force and effect.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.