

HOUSE BILL NO. 3288

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE BARNES.

7191H.011

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapter 209, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to communication access services.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 209, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be
2 known as section 209.247, to read as follows:

- 209.247. 1. As used in this section, the following terms mean:**
- 2 (1) "Commission", the Missouri commission for the deaf and hard of hearing;
 - 3 (2) "Communication access service", shall include, but not be limited to, the
 - 4 following:
 - 5 (a) Qualified interpreters, as described in section 209.285;
 - 6 (b) Communication access real-time translation services;
 - 7 (c) Notetakers, visual or Braille boards, and visual video services;
 - 8 (d) Open and closed captioning services;
 - 9 (e) Environmental access support for the deaf-blind and those with low vision;
 - 10 and
 - 11 (f) Any other effective method of making aurally delivered and printed
 - 12 information available to individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing;
 - 13 (3) "Communication access service provider", an individual who is trained to
 - 14 offer a communication access service to communicate aurally delivered and printed
 - 15 information to individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing.
 - 16 2. The commission shall establish a statewide communication access services
 - 17 program to improve compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act for

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets ~~thus~~ in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18 agencies and businesses by coordinating resources, filling service gaps, and assisting
19 with costs related to accommodations. The commission shall:

20 (1) Develop and maintain a statewide registry of communication access service
21 providers, organized by region, including rural and urban areas;

22 (2) Create a process for communication access service providers to apply for
23 placement on the registry;

24 (3) Establish minimum standards for training, equipment, and technology;

25 (4) Maintain an informational website accessible by businesses, agencies, and
26 individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing regarding resources and
27 available programming;

28 (5) Provide consultation, training, and technical assistance to aid state and local
29 agencies to be in compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act;

30 (6) Provide information regarding available resources to assist with compliance
31 costs and to support potential communication access service providers in underserved
32 areas;

33 (7) Conduct outreach activities for urban or rural residents and communication
34 access service providers to expand awareness and capacity in underserved areas;

35 (8) Subject to appropriation, administer scholarships for professional
36 development, internships, and certification testing;

37 (9) Subject to appropriation and pursuant to rules promulgated under this
38 section, administer and finance requests for communication access services between
39 agencies and businesses and individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing;

40 (10) Hire a program manager to serve at the pleasure of the director of the
41 commission. The program manager shall have a background and experience in
42 communication access services. The salary for the program manager shall be paid out
43 of the fund established in subsection 3 of this section; and

44 (11) Submit an annual report to the governor and the general assembly that
45 includes information on communication access service utilization, registry effectiveness,
46 funding outcomes, and recommendations for improvement.

47 3. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Communication Access
48 Services Fund", which shall consist of moneys appropriated to the fund and any gifts,
49 donations, grants, and bequests from individuals, private organizations, foundations, or
50 other sources for the purpose of administering the program established in this section.
51 The state treasurer shall be the custodian of the fund. In accordance with sections
52 30.170 and 30.180, the state treasurer may approve disbursements. The fund shall be a
53 dedicated fund and, upon appropriation, moneys in the fund shall be used by the

54 **commission for the salary of the program manager, distribution of financial assistance**
55 **for communication access services, and distribution of scholarships under this section.**

56 **(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, any moneys**
57 **remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the**
58 **general revenue fund.**

59 **(3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the same manner as**
60 **other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be**
61 **credited to the fund.**

62 **4. The commission shall promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this**
63 **section, including the process for distributing scholarships under subdivision (8) of**
64 **subsection 2 of this section and determining eligibility for financial assistance under**
65 **subdivision (9) of subsection 2 of this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term**
66 **is defined in section 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section**
67 **shall become effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of**
68 **chapter 536 and, if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are**
69 **nonseverable and if any of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to**
70 **chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are**
71 **subsequently held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule**
72 **proposed or adopted after August 28, 2026, shall be invalid and void.**

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