

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1523

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Human Services*

Title: An act relating to establishing regional service centers for the deaf.

Brief Description: Establishing regional service centers for the deaf.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Day, Wineberry, Edmondson, Bray, Lisk, Belcher, Inslee, Morris, Jones, Mitchell, Franklin, Mielke, Nelson, Casada, Brekke, Ferguson, Leonard, Silver, Ludwig, Rayburn, Peery, Scott, Pruitt, Chandler, McLean, Holland, Wang, Jacobsen, Winsley and Anderson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Human Services, February 13, 1991, DP.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HUMAN SERVICES**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 11 members: Representatives Leonard, Chair; Riley, Vice Chair; Winsley, Ranking Minority Member; Tate, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Beck; Brekke; Hargrove; Hochstatter; R. King; and H. Myers.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

Background: Deaf and hard of hearing people have difficulty accessing services for which they are eligible and entitled, because of their disability. The current array of services available through the Department of Social and Health Services is not always available to deaf and hard of hearing people because of a lack of: interpreters, coordination among service providers, and training and consultative services to public and private agencies.

Summary of Bill: An office of deaf services is established within the Department of Social and Health Services. The department will establish a regional service center for the deaf and hard of hearing in each of five regions. A state deaf services advisory committee and five regional deaf service advisory committees are established.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 1, 1991.

Appropriation: Yes.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill passed.

Testimony For: Deaf and hard of hearing people need better communication services through interpreters and other services to become valuable, contributing members of society. Many services for the deaf and hard of hearing are not fully utilized, because it is difficult to access them. Regional deaf service centers can provide these services in close proximity to deaf and hard of hearing people's communities.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Gary Mann, Central Washington Service Center for the Deaf; Thelma Struch and Leon Curtis, Department of Social and Health Services; Jean Stokesbary, Southwest Washington Center for the Deaf; and Sharon Schira-Layton, Camille Poe and Janet Johanson, Seattle Service Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.