

**SENATE . . . . . No. 238**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

*Patricia D. Jehlen*

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying bill:

An Act regarding sign language proficiency for certain teachers and educational interpreters.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Patricia D. Jehlen</i>	<i>Second Middlesex</i>
<i>David M. Rogers</i>	<i>24th Middlesex</i>
<i>Benjamin Swan</i>	<i>11th Hampden</i>
<i>John W. Scibak</i>	<i>2nd Hampshire</i>

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By Ms. Jehlen, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 238) of Patricia D. Jehlen, David M. Rogers, Benjamin Swan and John W. Scibak for legislation to regard sign language proficiency for certain teachers and educational interpreters. Education.

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen**  
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An Act regarding sign language proficiency for certain teachers and educational interpreters.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 6 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010 Official Edition, is  
2 hereby amended by inserting after section 198 the following section:- Section 198A. The  
3 commission shall determine or develop an assessment for communication proficiency in Sign  
4 Language for teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing: ASL/Total Communication.  
5 The commission shall also determine or develop an assessment for interpreting proficiency in  
6 sign language for educational interpreters who use sign language with students who are deaf or  
7 hard of hearing.

8 SECTION 2. Section 38G of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2010  
9 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “successor”, in line 246, the  
10 following two paragraphs:-

11 On or before June 30, 2014 and subject to appropriation, proficiency in sign language  
12 shall be a requirement for certification as a teacher of students who are deaf or hard of hearing:  
13 American Sign Language/Total Communication. Proficiency in sign language shall be verified  
14 through a communication proficiency assessment determined or developed by the commission  
15 for the deaf and hard of hearing and approved by the commissioner of elementary and secondary  
16 education.

17 By June 2014, the commission for the deaf and hard of hearing and the department of  
18 elementary and secondary education shall jointly develop a timetable for the assessment of  
19 registered educational interpreter’s proficiency in sign language interpretation and shall report on  
20 the timetable to the Joint Committee on Education. The method of assessment of educational

- 21 interpreter proficiency shall be approved and administered by the commission for the deaf and
- 22 hard of hearing and approved by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education.