

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Linda W. Cropp
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer

DATE: May 25, 2001

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement: "American Sign Language
Recognition Act of 2001"

REFERENCE: Bill Number 14-038 as Introduced

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2001 budget and the FY 2002 through FY 2005 budget and financial plan because no additional staff or resources will be required to implement the components of the proposed legislation and there will be no reduction in existing General Fund revenue.

In order to accommodate the provisions of the proposed legislation, the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) and the District of Columbia Public School System (DCPS) will need to remain within existing staff positions. To the extent that American Sign Language is offered in either DCPS or UDC, instruction in some other matter would likely need to be reduced to accommodate the new addition to the curriculum.

The proposed legislation does not authorize an increase in either funding or staff positions. In implementing the proposed legislation, UDC and DCPS will be required to remain within their authorized number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions and authorized Personal Services budget. Anti-deficiency laws, 31USCA § 1341 (2000), prohibit District officers and employees from exceeding agency appropriations in any fiscal year.

Background

As a result of the proposed legislation, UDC and DCPS may be required to allocate a certain number of teaching positions to instruct students in American Sign Language. The proposed legislation requires that American Sign Language be recognized as a foreign language and be treated as a foreign language in all curricula. The proposed legislation addresses teacher certification criteria.

Financial Plan Impact

Because this legislation has no material impact on the cost of services provided by the District of Columbia and has no effect on General Fund revenue, the proposed legislation has no fiscal impact. The Mayor, the Board of Directors for the University of the District of Columbia, and the Board of Education of the District of Columbia will be required to remain within the existing authorized funding and FTE positions when implementing the provisions of the proposed legislation.

By statutorily dedicating a particular faculty position there inherently must be a reduction in other educational services. In order to comply with the provisions of the proposed legislation UDC and DCPS will need to change one type of educator into another. Normally this requires a change in personnel. It is not reasonable to expect an educator to change their specialization. UDC and DCPS cannot convert a position by converting a person. Thus, what the converted position taught before the decision was made to make the change will disappear and be replaced with the position that is needed to comply with the provisions of the proposed legislation