

April 1, 2026
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Re: Comments from the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) on the Language Access for All Act of 2026

The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) wishes to express its appreciation for the introduction of the *Language Access for All Act of 2026*. This important legislation represents a significant step toward strengthening language access protections and ensuring meaningful access to federal programs and services for individuals who are limited English proficient (LEP).

Founded in 1978, NAJIT represents more than 1,100 court interpreters, translators, judicial officers, scholars, and trainers dedicated to advancing professional standards and ensuring equal access to justice for LEP individuals. NAJIT is pleased to endorse the proposed legislation and respectfully offers the following comments and recommendations to enhance clarity, consistency, and effective implementation.

Having endorsed the draft bill overall, the NAJIT Board of Directors respectfully offers the following suggestions for improving the bill:

Terminology and Consistency

Page 1: The phrase “individuals with limited English proficiency” appears multiple times throughout the bill. While commonly used, this phrasing may suggest a condition rather than a characteristic. NAJIT recommends using “individuals who are limited English proficient,” with the abbreviation “(LEP)” introduced upon first reference.

Page 2, line 3: The phrase “individuals with LEP” may be more clearly written as either “LEP individuals” or “individuals who are LEP.” Whichever formulation is selected should be applied consistently throughout the bill.

Clarity in Language Assistance Provisions

Page 3, §(C): NAJIT suggests revising this section as follows:
“(C) recognizing, as an alternative to delivering services through qualified interpreters or translators, the use of demonstrably bilingual staff of the agency who have been assessed and are qualified to deliver accurate and effective communication as an appropriate method of providing language assistance services in both English and one or more additional languages.”

Page 3, line 13: Suggested revision:
“...and more cost-efficient than the use of qualified interpreters or translators;”

Technical and Grammatical Revisions

Page 4, line 1: Remove the word “in” so the phrase reads: “...the language access plan established by the agency....”

Page 4, line 9: The final word should be “described,” not “describe.”

Page 6, lines 8–9: The phrase “...do not have a commonly used written format” may benefit from greater specificity to avoid ambiguity or misinterpretation.

Recognition of Qualified Language Professionals

Page 9, lines 15–23: NAJIT recommends including qualified interpreters and translators among the stakeholders consulted in developing standards.

Page 12, lines 23–24: If “providers of professional language services” refers to interpreters and translators, NAJIT suggests revising this to “qualified interpreters and translators.”

Clarity and Redundancy

Page 19, lines 17–18: The phrase “...for whom English is not a primary language and...” appears redundant and may be removed, as the subsequent language sufficiently conveys the intended meaning.

Structure and Certification Standards

Page 21, line 1: The grammatical structure requires the addition of “is” at the beginning of the sentence so that it reads: “is capable of effective....”

Page 21, lines 1–23: NAJIT offers two recommendations:

First, it is unclear why two separate subsections are used to describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of translators and interpreters. These may be more effectively combined into a single subsection.

Second, it is important to specify how these knowledge, skills, and abilities are documented. NAJIT recommends referencing recognized certification processes, including those administered by the American Translators Association (ATA); state court interpreter certification programs developed in coordination with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC); the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, including the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination (FCICE); and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) for sign language interpreters. Other recognized certification bodies, such as those affiliated with the United Nations and the U.S. Department of State, may also be appropriate.

General Comment

As presently constructed, the bill does not clearly indicate whether it is intended to address the

communication needs of Deaf or blind individuals. For example, early sections refer to “spoken and written language needs” and to services such as “oral interpretation” and “telephonic or remote interpretation,” suggesting a focus on spoken languages. However, later sections introduce references to “signed communication,” individuals who “speak, sign, read, or write in a different language,” and those who communicate through “signed or manual language,” which may also include individuals who are blind.

If the intent is to include Deaf individuals, blind individuals, or both, NAJIT recommends clarifying this consistently throughout the bill. If not, these references should be revised or removed to ensure alignment and clarity.

For these reasons, NAJIT respectfully offers these recommendations to support the continued development of clear, effective, and equitable language access policy at the federal level. We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and commend the leadership behind this important legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any additional input or clarification.

Respectfully submitted,
The NAJIT Board of Directors

For additional information or clarification, please contact NAJIT at hq@najit.org

cc: NAJIT Advocacy Committee