

Gov. Evers: Signs bill to reform Sign Language Interpreting Licensure System in Wisconsin

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MILWAUKEE — Gov. Tony Evers today signed bipartisan legislation, Assembly Bill 250, now 2019 Wisconsin Act 17, into law. The bill allows the Department of Health Services to administer the Board for Evaluations Interpreters exam, easing the process for those entering the interpreting field. In addition to changing the licensing process, Assembly Bill 250 also creates a Sign Language Interpreters Advisory Committee composed of members of the deaf and hard of hearing community and licensed interpreters.

“We’re working to ensure deaf and hard of hearing folks across our state have access to reliable and experienced interpreters no matter the situation or circumstance,” said Gov. Evers. “This is a critical first step toward inclusion and equity for the deaf and hard of hearing community, and, perhaps most importantly, that we are committed to making sure they have a say in the issues that directly affect their daily lives and well-being.”

Assembly Bill 250, now 2019 Wisconsin Act 17:

Grants flexibility to those entering the field of interpreting to better serve the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing community by requiring the Department of Health Services or a department-approved exam administrator the Board for Evaluations Interpreters exam.

Expands and changes criteria for sign language interpreter licensing tiers ensuring sign language interpreters have additional training needed to interpret in high-risk

settings like emergency rooms, mental health facilities, and legal interactions.