

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 281
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Administration
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Terms that use the word "impaired," such as "hearing impaired" or "auditory impairment," imply that persons who are deaf inherently are diminished and perpetuate stereotypes that such persons are less competent and capable. What's more, the use of such terms is incompatible with existing law that requires the use of person-first, respectful language.

S.B. 281 directs the legislature and the Texas Legislative Council to avoid using the terms "hearing impaired," "hearing loss," "auditory impairment," and "speech impaired," when drafting future legislation and to replace such terms with specific alternatives as necessary when amending existing statutes. This will ensure that persons who are deaf or hard of hearing are respectfully referenced in Texas statutes.

As proposed, S.B. 281 amends current law relating to the use of respectful terminology in provisions of Texas statutes relating to the deaf community.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 392.002, Government Code, as follows:

Sec. 392.002. USE OF PERSON FIRST RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE REQUIRED. (a)
Makes no changes to this subsection.

(b) Makes no changes to this subsection.

(c) Directs the legislature and the Texas Legislative Council (TLC) to avoid using the terms "hearing impaired," "hearing loss," "auditory impairment," and "speech impaired" in reference to a deaf or hard of hearing person in any new statute or resolution. Requires the legislature and TLC to replace the terms in this subsection in existing statute or resolution with the words "deaf" or "hard of hearing," as appropriate.

(d) Redesignates existing Subsection (c) as Subsection (d). Makes no further changes to this subsection.