

2017 -- H 5184

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

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A N A C T

RELATING TO COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEDURE - OFFICIAL COURT INTERPRETERS

Introduced By: Representatives Blazejewski, Keable, Johnston, Solomon, and Shanley

Date Introduced: January 19, 2017

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 8-5-8.2 of the General Laws in Chapter 8-5 entitled "Court  
2 Secretaries, Court Reporters, and Electronic Court Reporters" is hereby amended to read as  
3 follows:

4           **8-5-8.2. Privileged communications.**

5           In the trial of every cause, both civil and criminal, no interpreter/transliterato  
6 deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind or an official interpreter employed or contracted by the state  
7 office of court interpreters acting in their official capacity shall be competent to testify concern  
8 any statement made to him or her in connection with the interpreter's or transliterato  
9 interpretation or transliteration for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind or in connection with  
10 interpretation or transliteration performed by an official interpreter employed or contracted by the  
11 state office of court interpreters acting in their official capacity, without the consent of the person  
12 making the statement. No duly licensed interpreter/transliterato  
13 deaf-blind or an official interpreter employed or contracted by the state office of court interpreters  
14 acting in their official capacity shall be allowed, in giving testimony to disclose any confidential  
15 communication, properly entrusted to him or her in his or her professional capacity, and  
16 necessary and proper to enable him or her to discharge the functions of his or her office in the  
17 usual course of practice or discipline, without the consent of the person making the  
18 communication.

19           SECTION 2. Section 9-17-25 of the General Laws in Chapter 9-17 entitled "Witnesses"

1 is hereby amended to read as follows:

2 **9-17-25. Privileged communication -- Interpreter.**

3 Whenever a sign language interpreter or an official interpreter employed or contracted by  
4 the state office of court interpreters acting in their official capacity is used to facilitate a  
5 communication which is privileged pursuant to either statutory law or common law between  
6 parties, one or more of whom is hearing impaired, the sign language interpreter or an official  
7 interpreter employed or contracted by the state office of court interpreters acting in their official  
8 capacity shall not be compelled to testify in any forum regarding that communication.

9 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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1           This act would render privileged all communications engaged in by interpreters of the  
2 state office of interpreters, while acting in their official capacity.

3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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