

HB 2998 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Business and Labor

Action Date: 04/03/19

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 7-4-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Barker, Bynum, Clem, Doherty, Evans, Fahey, Holvey

Nays: 4 - Barreto, Boles, Bonham, Boshart Davis

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Jan Nordlund, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/13, 4/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Secretary of State to make business filing forms available in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, and Korean. Requires person submitting form in language other than English to submit reasonably authenticated English translation of the information. Removes requirement that business filings be in English language. Provides process to change the five selected foreign languages. Appropriates unspecified amount out of General Fund to Secretary of State to create forms in five languages and hire four bilingual staff to assist with business registry functions. Requires forms to be available in specified foreign languages by July 1, 2021.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Language barrier to registering business
- Cost to implement
- Support of Secretary of State to increase accessibility and equality

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces measure.

BACKGROUND:

Businesses file documents with the Secretary of State when starting a business and annually thereafter. They must also file to report certain changes, such as changes in location, registered agent, or ownership. Current law allows foreign business filings to be in a language other than English if the filing is accompanied by a reasonably authenticated English translation. Business filings are public records.

House Bill 2998-A removes the requirement that business filings with the Secretary of State be in English and requires the Secretary of State to make the forms available in five languages in addition to English. The measure requires a person completing the form with information written in a language other than English to submit a reasonably authenticated English translation.