

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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SENATE DRS55223-LE-14B (12/27)

Short Title: Offer Sign Language in Schools & Colleges. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Purcell.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1
2 AN ACT ENCOURAGING THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, THE COMMUNITY
3 COLLEGE SYSTEM, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA TO
4 OFFER AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE FOR CREDIT AS A MODERN
5 FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

6 Whereas, American Sign Language is a fully developed, autonomous, natural
7 language with a unique grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and cultural heritage; and

8 Whereas, the gestures, visual components, and structures of American Sign
9 Language are neither derived from English nor a simplified version of English; and

10 Whereas, American Sign Language is the predominant language most
11 commonly used by the deaf community in the United States; and

12 Whereas, there is increasing acceptance of American Sign Language as a
13 foreign language taught in the public schools in the United States; and

14 Whereas, 33 states currently have legislation recognizing American Sign
15 Language as a foreign language; and

16 Whereas, there is an increased acceptance of American Sign Language as a
17 foreign language among foreign language faculty at colleges and universities; Now
18 therefore,

19 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

20 **SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 115C-296 is amended by adding a new subsection to
21 read:

22 "(g) The State Board of Education shall adopt and implement standards for the
23 certification of teachers of American Sign Language and shall set standards for teacher
24 preparation programs that prepare students for certification as American Sign Language
25 teachers."

1 **SECTION 1.(b)** The State Board of Education shall report to the Joint
2 Legislative Education Oversight Committee by October 1, 2007, on the implementation
3 of this section.

4 **SECTION 2.(a)** Chapter 115D-5 of the General Statutes is amended by
5 adding a new subsection to read:

6 "(r) The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop curriculum and
7 continuing education standards for courses of instruction in American Sign Language
8 and shall encourage community colleges to offer courses in American Sign Language as
9 a modern foreign language."

10 **SECTION 2.(b)** The State Board of Community Colleges shall report to the
11 Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by October 1, 2007, on the
12 implementation of this section.

13 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 116-11 is amended by adding a new subdivision to
14 read:

15 **"§ 116-11. Powers and duties generally.**

16 The powers and duties of the Board of Governors shall include the following:

17 ...

18 (4b) The Board of Governors shall encourage the constituent institutions to
19 offer courses in American Sign Language as a modern foreign
20 language."

21 **SECTION 3.(b)** The Board of Governors of The University of North
22 Carolina shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by
23 October 1, 2007, on the implementation of this section.

24 **SECTION 4.** This act is effective when it becomes law.