

April 13, 2009

H 1477. INTERPRETERS IN THE COURTS/FUNDS. Filed 4/9/09. *TO PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS TO COURT SERVICES AND TO FULLY FUND INTERPRETER NEEDS IN THE COURTS.*

Repeals GS 7A-314(f) regarding provision of interpreters where the Judicial Department is bearing the costs of representation for a party and in certain criminal and domestic violence cases. Creates GS 7A-314A to provide that if a party or witness does not speak or understand English, the cost of interpreting or translating services is payable by the Judicial Department. Allows the Administrative Office of the Courts and the Office of Indigent Defense Services to enter a memorandum of understanding for payment of such services for parties where the Judicial Department is bearing the costs of representation. If a party or witness elects a translator of his or her choice, the party or witness is to bear that cost. Provides that state is not obligated to bear the costs of interpreting or translating services for non-court activities. Provides that the party or witness shall bear the costs of these services if the party or witness fails to appear without good cause. Makes conforming amendments to GS 7A-343 and GS 7A-305. Provides that on and after the effective date of the act, no order or reimbursement may be entered against a party or witness for translation services rendered prior to the effective date (with specified exceptions). Effective December 1, 2009.

Appropriates from the General Fund \$1,422,641 for 2009-10 and \$1,422,641 for 2010-11 to fund additional foreign language interpreter services. Effective July 1, 2009.

Intro. by Blue.

GS 7A, APPROP