

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS TANIA FERNANDES ANDERSON, BREADON, DURKAN, COLETTA, FITZGERALD, FLYNN, MURPHY, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBBER AND LOUIJEUNE



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS CREATING A FUND FOR TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETIVE SERVICES TO BE UTILIZED AT COMMUNITY MEETINGS HELD BY CITY COUNCILORS

WHEREAS, Boston is home to over 100,000 adults that have a limited proficiency in the English language, which equates to about 1 in every 8 adults in the city, or 12.5% of the city's adult population; *and*

WHEREAS In certain districts and neighborhoods of the city, such as D7, this percentage rises considerably, meaning that, in certain neighborhoods, closer to $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the people may speak English as a second language or not be sufficiently proficient in said language to properly and fully understand its complete meaning; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston is an international city with people who speak a plethora of languages, including Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, Portuguese, Vietnamese and Chinese, among others; *and*

WHEREAS, While some of the people utilize the languages listed above as their primary language, many others do not, and struggle to follow discussions and discourses held in English; *and*

WHEREAS, The Hispanic / Latino community in Boston, for example, is over 133,000 people which is roughly 20% of our city's population, and of that number, Spanish is the primary language for the majority, with about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total in need of translation and interpretive services for a full grasp of communications in English; *and*

WHEREAS, It is essential that ELL families obtain all relevant information emanating from their representatives, school officials, and others in positions of authority so that they can fully participate civically, educationally, and in all realms of the workings of our city; *and*

WHEREAS, We are fortunate to have under the city's auspices The Office Of Language And Communication Services, who currently contract out for interpretation services, and offer a variety of translation and interpretation services, though, as it stands,

they are not able to assist city councilors due to how the council budget is allocated, thereby creating the problematic situation in which individual councilors must utilize funds from their own office budgets if they want to provide interpretation services

WHEREAS, In Dorchester, nearly a 3rd of our residents are foreign born, and in Roxbury, about a 4th of our residents are foreign born, and in both cases, a vast majority of the people emanate from nations in which English is not the primary language, with the Dominican Republic, Cabo Verde, Haiti and Vietnam being some of the nations at the top of the list; *and*

WHEREAS, These hardworking, immigrant populations of color that add so much to our city are often left out in the proverbial cold when it comes to accessing the mechanisms of power; *and*

WHEREAS, We are fortunate to have within our midst a variety of organizations and nonprofits that do excellent work in the realm of translation services, such as “Found in Translation” which is an organization that trains low income women in offering valuable interpretive and translation services, as well as “English for New Bostonians” which provides funding and training to speakers of limited English in Boston; *and*

WHEREAS, Furthermore, “English For New Bostonians” works with such worthy enterprises Asian American Civic Association (AACA) where they help prepare people to continue their careers in STEM by assisting them with translation services, as well as the Gilbert Albert Community Center (GACC) in Dorchester, where morning classes are targeted to newly arrived Haitian immigrants, amongst other partnerships and collaborations; *and*

WHEREAS, Additionally, “Found in Translation” has alumnae available to assist in an array of assignments, including translation in the medical field, in community forums, which, of course, gets to the crux of the issue under discussion, educational meetings, and other events, and while they operate via individual request of the person seeking translation, could be a viable stakeholder in a future partnership with the city; *and*

WHEREAS, These organizations and others would be wonderful to partner with for said translation and interpretive services for meetings with councilors within our respective communities and districts; *and*

WHEREAS, The need for such translation and interpreting services is sufficiently vital that the City of Boston should allocate funds of a nature that allows for interpreters to be present at all community meetings in which councilors present and/or interact with their constituents, since we already know that a significant population of our city needs said services; *and*

WHEREAS, In order for us to add action and content to the words and form of equity

and inclusion, it is imperative that we allocate these funds, so that all of our residents can fully participate and shape the future of our city: **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That a hearing be held by the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council to discuss the possibility and feasibility of an allocation fund for interpretation and translation services, and for said hearing to involve such participants as The Office of Language and Communication Services, various non-profits in the field of interpretation, including the aforementioned “English for New Bostonians” and “Found in Translation, as well as community activists, concerned stakeholders and others who seek an equitable outlay of translation services across all of our communities.

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