



SB 900: Protects Access to Language Services

Bill Preserves Highly Skilled, \$2 Billion Sector in State

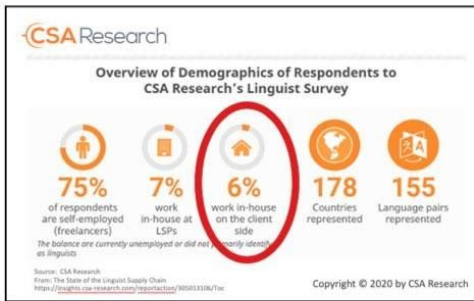
Prevents Cutoff of Professionals, Led by Women- and Immigrant-Run Small Businesses

March 30, 2020

ANALYSIS:

New state legislation **SB 900** addresses a grave problem in California affecting language professionals—translators and interpreters—and people they serve. The problem stems from a 2019 law on misclassification of workers (AB 5). The new legislation, SB 900, is sponsored by Sen. Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo).

At least 75 percent of practicing interpreters and translators in California are independent contractors. They serve millions of ordinary people in every sector of daily life, including business, education, conferences, entertainment, athletics, law and the courts, the arts, healthcare, and human services.



Among translators and interpreters, self-employment is the norm, not the exception. Only a handful of linguists fit the definition of employee status. Those who believe they are denied employee status have clear recourse under AB 5. The lion's share of professionals, however, who are independent contractors or self-employed gained no safe harbor outside of employee status in order to practice in California.

SB 900 provides a set of conditions, including credentials, whereby practicing interpreters and translators can continue to operate and serve Californians.

SB 900 protects access to essential language service by Californians, including people with disabilities or with limited English proficiency, crucial to every aspect of daily life in our diverse state.

SB 900 prevents cutoff of highly trained professionals, led by women- and immigrant-run small businesses, who are backbones of a growing \$2 billion sector of the California economy.

The **Coalition of Practicing Translators and Interpreters of California (CoPTIC)** expresses tentative support for this legislation. We will continue to work with lawmakers to secure amendments and solutions that respect the indispensable contributions of language professionals to the people and communities we serve and to California's economy.

Questions? Call 805-689-4822 or coalitionptic@gmail.com.

References:

1) At least 75 percent of translators and interpreters work independently, in fact, by choice:
<http://coalitionptic.org/2020/03/23/overwhelming-majority-of-interpreters-and-translators-are-independent-in-fact-by-choice/>

2) Language professionals in California becoming casualties of AB 5, led by women and immigrant small-business owners: <https://www.thecalifornian.com/story/opinion/2020/01/14/translators-say-they-casualties-new-california-gig-regulation/4466324002/>

3) AB 5 continues to plague professionals, including linguists [in Spanish]:
<https://laopinion.com/2020/02/26/la-ley-ab-5-continua-afectando-negativamente-a-trabajadores/>
[If needed, ask CoPTIC for an English translation, expertly prepared by a well-trained California linguist.]



CoPTIC advocates meet with Sen. Jerry Hill ahead of introduction of SB 900.