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Senate Bill 382 and 383 (as reported without amendment)  
Sponsor: Senator Stephanie Chang (S.B. 382)  
Senator Mary Cavanaugh (S.B. 383)  
Committee: Housing and Human Services

### **CONTENT**

Senate Bill 382 would enact the "Equal Language Access to State Services Act" to do the following:

- Require each covered entity to provide equal language access to public services for individuals with limited English proficiency.
- Prescribe the reasonable steps a covered entity would have to take to provide equal language access.
- Prohibit a covered entity from charging individuals with limited English proficiency for the use of oral language services or translation.
- Require each covered entity to develop and submit a report with specified information to the Office of Global Michigan at least every two years.
- Prescribe the requirements for a staff training plan at each covered entity.

Senate Bill 383 would enact the "Statewide Equal Language Access Coordination Act" to specify the duties of the Office of Global Michigan pursuant to Senate Bill 382 and create a complaint process in collaboration with the Department of Civil Rights for individuals who believed they had been denied full access to a covered entity or discriminated against because of their national origin.

The bills are tie-barred, and each bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

### **BRIEF RATIONALE**

According to testimony before the Senate Committee on Housing and Human Services, Michigan has a growing immigrant population. Reportedly, many of these individuals have limited English proficiency. As with all residents, these individuals must interact with public services in English; however, translations for their respective primary languages are unavailable and so they may have difficulty in those interactions. It has been suggested that legislation be enacted to ensure these individuals have full and equal access for engagement with the State government and State services.

Legislative Analyst: Eleni Lionas

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Senate Bill 382 would have a minimal fiscal impact on the State and would have no fiscal impact on local units of government. Departments could need to hire additional staff of contracted services to provide face-to-face, in-house, or telephonic oral language services to individuals with limited English proficiency. Departments also could incur costs to ensure language services and documents were available to local offices and provide liaisons and implementation reports to the Office of Global Michigan. For departments that provide

statewide services through an online portal or telephone number, it is unclear in the bill if there would be a language population threshold that would require the department to provide language services for a limited language population that accessed the statewide service. Most departments likely already provide language services for 3% of the population of the State and for local offices. Therefore, costs would likely be minimal for most departments and within current appropriations.

Senate Bill 383 would have a fiscal impact on the Office of Global Michigan and would have no fiscal impact on local units of government. The Office of Global Michigan would likely need to hire additional staff and would likely have additional administrative costs to provide a liaison and training to each covered entity. The costs would depend on how much training would be needed for each covered entity and if a liaison could cover multiple entities. For Fiscal Year 2023-24, the Office of Global Michigan was appropriated 15.0 full-time equivalents and \$39.9 million.

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.