



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

MASSACHUSETTS

Legislation Summary:

An Act Relative to Language Access and Inclusion

Initial bill number(s): H.3084/S.1990

Sponsors: Sen. DiDomenico, Rep. Madaro, Rep. Gonzalez

What the bill does, why LWVMA supports or opposes it, and the League position relative to this bill.

The bill would expand the availability of resources in languages other than English, including American Sign Language, at the state's public-facing state agencies by requiring them to offer translated materials and interpreting services. It would break down the language barriers that often prevent people with limited English proficiency (LEP) from accessing key services they need, such as healthcare, child welfare, food assistance, unemployment assistance, legal services, and so on. The bill would enable 850,000+ people with LEP in MA to access these critical services.

The League has a long history of advocating for equitable access to the services that help fulfill basic human needs. From LWVUS, *Impact on Issues*:

p.14: Equal Opportunity/Equal Rights: The League supports "equal rights for all under state and federal law regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability."

p.122: "The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide equality of opportunity for education, employment, and housing for all persons in the United States regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability."

p. 147: "...the administration of social services programs should be responsive to the needs of the people being served."

LWVMA *Where We Stand*, p. 34: Social Policy: Goal: To "promote social and economic justice, secure equal rights for all and combat discrimination and poverty." (LWVUS) (1980)

