

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2527

To provide grants for training of realtime court reporters and closed captioners to meet the requirements for closed captioning set forth in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 17, 2001

Mr. KIND (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. PETRI, and Mr. KLECZKA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To provide grants for training of realtime court reporters and closed captioners to meet the requirements for closed captioning set forth in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Training for Closed
5 Captioners Act of 2001”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) As directed by the Congress in section 723
2 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 613)
3 (as added by section 305 of the Telecommunications
4 Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–104, 110 Stat. 56,
5 126, February 8, 1996)), the Federal Communica-
6 tions Commission adopted rules requiring closed
7 captioning of most television programming, which
8 gradually require new video programming to be fully
9 captioned beginning in 2006.

10 (2) Over 28 million Americans, or 8 percent,
11 are considered deaf or hard of hearing and many re-
12 quire captioning services to participate in main-
13 stream activities.

14 (3) Over 24,000 children are born each year
15 with some form of hearing loss.

16 (4) According to the United States Department
17 of Health and Human Services and a study done by
18 the National Council on Aging—

19 (A) 25 percent of Americans over 65 years
20 old are hearing impaired;

21 (B) 33 percent of Americans over 70 years
22 old are hearing impaired; and

23 (C) 41 percent of Americans over 75 years
24 old are hearing impaired.

1 (5) The National Council on Aging study also
2 found that depression in older adults may be directly
3 related to hearing loss and disconnection with the
4 spoken word.

5 (6) Over the past 5 years, student enrollment in
6 programs that train court reporters to become closed
7 captioners has decreased significantly, causing such
8 programs to close on many campuses.

9 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF GRANT PROGRAM TO PRO-**
10 **MOTE TRAINING OF CLOSED CAPTIONERS.**

11 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Labor shall pro-
12 vide grants to not more than 20 eligible entities under sub-
13 section (b), to promote training of students (including
14 those who have completed a court reporting training pro-
15 gram) to become realtime closed captioners, to meet the
16 requirements set forth in section 723 of the Communica-
17 tions Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 613) and the rules pre-
18 scribed thereunder.

19 (b) **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**—An eligible entity shall be
20 a court reporting program approved by the National Court
21 Reporters Association and accredited by an accrediting
22 agency recognized by the Department of Education.

23 (c) **MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF GRANT.**—The amount of
24 a grant provided under subsection (a) to an entity eligible

1 under subsection (b) may not exceed \$1,000,000 for any
2 fiscal year.

3 **SEC. 4. APPLICATION.**

4 To receive a grant under section 3, an eligible entity
5 shall submit an application to the Secretary of Labor at
6 such time, in such manner, and containing such informa-
7 tion as the Secretary may reasonably require.

8 **SEC. 5. USE OF FUNDS.**

9 (a) PERMITTED USES.—An eligible entity that re-
10 ceives a grant under this Act shall use the funds to recruit
11 and train students (including those who have completed
12 a court reporting training program) to become realtime
13 closed captioners, including—

14 (1) recruitment costs;

15 (2) scholarship incentives and opportunities;

16 (3) payment of personnel directly related to the
17 operation of the program;

18 (4) development of a distance learning aspect of
19 the program;

20 (5) development of education and training pro-
21 grams;

22 (6) assistance in job placement for upcoming
23 and recent graduates with all types of captioning
24 employers; and

1 (7) encouragement of individuals with disabil-
2 ities to pursue a career in realtime closed captioning.

3 (b) **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT.**—In carrying out
4 the program described in subsection (a), a grant recipient
5 shall—

6 (1) provide for development and tracking of
7 performance-outcome measures for the program and
8 the program’s training providers; and

9 (2) prepare and submit to the Secretary such
10 reports as the Secretary may require on best prac-
11 tices and successes developed by the grant recipient
12 through the program.

13 (c) **ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.**—A recipient of a grant
14 under this Act may not use more than 5 percent of the
15 amount of such grant to pay for administrative costs asso-
16 ciated with the program described in subsection (a).

17 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

18 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
19 this Act \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2002 through
20 2006.

○