

No. 230

## AN ACT

HB 1628

Relating to interpreters for the deaf and persons whose hearing is impaired in criminal proceedings.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Legislative Policy.—It is hereby declared to be the public policy of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that the rights of persons who are deaf cannot be fully protected unless qualified interpreters are available to assist such persons in criminal proceedings.

The intent of this act is to provide a procedure for the appointment of interpreters to assist such persons in criminal proceedings.

Section 2. Definitions.—As used in this act:

(1) The term “deaf” shall mean persons who are deaf or whose hearing is so impaired that they are unable to understand or communicate the spoken English language.

(2) The term “interpreter” shall mean a person qualified and trained to translate for or communicate with persons defined as “deaf” in this section. Any person certified by the National or Local Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or similar registry shall be considered qualified for the purposes of this act.

Section 3. Appointment of an Interpreter.—(a) In any criminal proceeding in which a defendant is deaf the court shall appoint an interpreter to assist said person throughout the proceeding.

(b) Upon arrest for any alleged violation of any penal or criminal law, and prior to interrogating the deaf person, the arresting officer shall make available to such person an interpreter who shall be present with such person throughout the interrogation.

Section 4. Payment of the Interpreter.—Any person qualified to act as an interpreter pursuant to this act shall receive compensation as the court shall fix. Such costs shall not be placed on the defendant.

Section 5. Oath of Interpreters.— The interpreter shall swear or affirm that he shall make a true interpretation to said deaf persons and that he will repeat the statements of said deaf persons to the best of his skill.

APPROVED—The 10th day of October, A. D. 1974.

MILTON J. SHAPP

The foregoing is a true and correct copy of Act of the General Assembly  
No. 230.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "C. McLaughlin Tucker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C" and a prominent "T" at the end.

*Secretary of the Commonwealth.*