

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 122nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2005

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Legislative Document

No. 448

S.P. 146

In Senate, January 27, 2005

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### **An Act To Require Health Insurers To Cover the Cost of Sign Language Interpreters for All Nonhospital Medical Appointments**

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Reference to the Committee on Insurance and Financial Services suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by President EDMONDS of Cumberland.  
Cosponsored by Representative: BLANCHETTE of Bangor.

2  
3 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

4 **Sec. 1. 24 MRSA §2317-B, sub-§12-B** is enacted to read:

5 12-B. Title 24-A, sections 2761, 2847-L and 4252. Coverage  
6 for sign language interpreters, Title 24-A, sections 2761, 2847-L  
7 and 4252;

8 **Sec. 2. 24-A MRSA §2761** is enacted to read:

9 **§2761. Coverage for sign language interpreters**

10 **1. Sign language interpreter; definition.** For the purposes  
11 of this section, "sign language interpreter" means a person  
12 fluent in American Sign Language who provides intermediary  
13 interpreting between a deaf or hard-of-hearing person and another  
14 person.

15 **2. Required coverage.** All individual health policies and  
16 contracts must provide coverage for the provision of a sign  
17 language interpreter for a person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing  
18 in accordance with the following requirements.

19 **A.** The hearing loss must be documented by a physician or  
20 audiologist licensed pursuant to Title 32, chapter 77.

21 **B.** Sign language interpreter services must be provided by a  
22 certified interpreter licensed pursuant to Title 32, chapter  
23 22.

24 **C.** A sign language interpreter must be provided for all  
25 covered nonhospital medical and dental care appointments  
26 applicable under this Title.

27 **Sec. 3. 24-A MRSA §2847-L** is enacted to read:

28 **§2847-L. Coverage for sign language interpreters**

29 **1. Sign language interpreter; definition.** For the purposes  
30 of this section, "sign language interpreter" means a person  
31 fluent in American Sign Language who provides intermediary  
32 interpreting between a deaf or hard-of-hearing person and another  
33 person.

34 **2. Required coverage.** All group insurance policies,  
35 contracts and certificates must provide coverage for the  
36 provision of a sign language interpreter for a person who is deaf  
37 or hard-of-hearing in accordance with the following requirements.  
38



2 dental care appointments for a deaf or hard-of-hearing person whose hearing loss has been documented by a physician or a licensed audiologist.