


F R O M	NAME & TITLE	Todd Carter Chief Information Officer <i>Todd A. Carter</i>	CITY of	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Baltimore City Office of Information & Technology 401 E. Fayette Street, 3rd floor	BALTIMORE	
	SUBJECT	24-0584 Baltimore City Government Entities - Language Access	M E M O	

October 16, 2024

TO: The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
Room 400 City Hall
c/o Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

Position: Favorable

Background

The Baltimore City Office of Information and Technology (BCIT) has completed its review of Council Bill 24-0583 Baltimore City Government Entities - Language Access. The purpose of this bill is to require certain Baltimore government entities to appoint a language access liaison and adopt a Language Access Plan. This bill also requires Baltimore government entities to provide language access services to specified individuals and establishes certain reporting requirements related to the provision of language access services by Baltimore government entities. Entity in the bill refers to Baltimore City government department, office, or other organization that administers a publicly-funded program that delivers a direct public service, regardless of whether the department, office, or organization is a recipient of federal financial support.

Analysis

BCIT strives to provide equitable, culturally sensitive and effective access to City services to all residents, regardless of their ability to speak, read or write English. Language accessibility services are available to individuals who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) that enable them to effectively communicate with BCIT in person, via the phone, in writing, and through electronic media. BCIT strives to engage ALL residents to help design, build and implement technology that creates a safe, thriving, and smart City. The agency has several divisions that have direct contact with the public. BCIT has reviewed the legislation, designated a language access liaison and will adhere to the requirements of the bill.

Fiscal Impact

There is fiscal impact due to this bill, but the exact figures are unknown. Calls to the 311 Center are already accessible to LEP individuals through the language line and therefore, will not result in an additional cost. In order to make the 311 web and mobile applications available in the top five non-English languages, it will cost approximately \$50,000 per language. As new applications are developed or purchased for residential use, there may

be additional cost incurred for them to be accessible in the top five non-English languages. Those costs will need to be estimated for new projects on a case-by-case basis.

Conclusion

BCIT supports CCB 24-0584, Baltimore City Government Entities - Language Access. If you have any questions, please contact Leyla Layman, Chief of Staff, at (443) 202-4511.

cc: Ms. Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations