HOUSE BILL 462
By Kane

SENATE BILL 524

By Massey

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 10, relative to American sign language education.

WHEREAS, American Sign Language is the official language of Tennessee's deaf community; and

WHEREAS, American Sign Language is used by more than 500,000 deaf and hard of hearing Tennesseans as their primary form of communication; and

WHEREAS, American Sign Language has its own unique grammar and is a distinct language; and

WHEREAS, American Sign Language is a marketable skill for workers in all professions and is in high demand; and

WHEREAS, it is beneficial for Tennessee's students to learn American Sign Language and the unique culture of the deaf community; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for Tennessee's teachers and students to have the curriculum and resources necessary to have successful courses; and

WHEREAS, no such curriculum currently is adopted by the State Textbook and Instructional Materials Quality Commission and the state board of education; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting for the General Assembly to further educational progress in Tennessee by calling for such curriculum and resources to be adopted; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-1009, is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriately designated subsection:

(c) The state board of education shall promulgate rules to adopt and implement books and appropriate curriculum for American sign language courses to satisfy foreign language requirements.

SECTION 2. For the purpose of promulgating rules, this act shall take effect upon becoming law, the public welfare requiring it. For all other purposes, this act shall take effect July 1, 2017.