

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 281

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the use of respectful terminology in provisions of Texas statutes relating to the deaf community.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 392.002, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 392.002. USE OF PERSON FIRST RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE REQUIRED. (a) The legislature and the Texas Legislative Council are directed to avoid using the following terms and phrases in any new statute or resolution and to change those terms and phrases used in any existing statute or resolution as sections including those terms and phrases are otherwise amended by law:

- (1) disabled;
- (2) developmentally disabled;
- (3) mentally disabled;
- (4) mentally ill;
- (5) mentally retarded;
- (6) handicapped;
- (7) cripple; and
- (8) crippled.

(b) In enacting or revising statutes or resolutions, the legislature and the Texas Legislative Council are directed to replace, as appropriate, terms and phrases listed by Subsection (a) with the following preferred phrases or appropriate variations of

1 those phrases:

- 2 (1) "persons with disabilities";
- 3 (2) "persons with developmental disabilities";
- 4 (3) "persons with mental illness"; and
- 5 (4) "persons with intellectual disabilities."

6 (c) The legislature and the Texas Legislative Council are  
7 further directed to avoid using the terms "hearing impaired,"  
8 "hearing loss," "auditory impairment," and "speech impaired," in  
9 reference to a deaf or hard of hearing person in any new statute or  
10 resolution. The legislature and the Texas Legislative Council shall  
11 replace the terms in this subsection in existing statute or  
12 resolution with the words "deaf" or "hard of hearing," as  
13 appropriate.

14 (d) A statute or resolution is not invalid solely because it  
15 does not employ this section's preferred phrases.