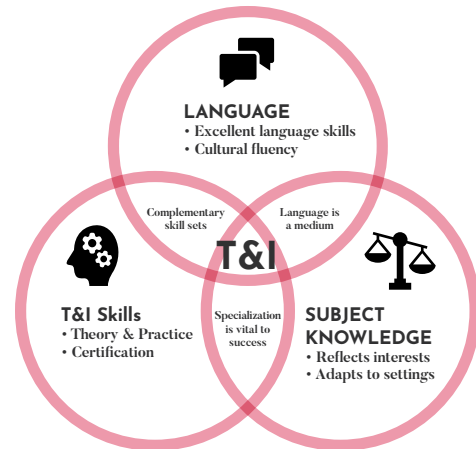


# Minnesota's Dedicated Court Interpreters Need for Your Support

## Judicial Interpreter bill to raise 23-year-long frozen wages up to 21st century standards



**OUR GOAL:** Increase Judicial Interpreter compensation to a competitive pay rate for certified and roster interpreters in an effort to stem the loss of quality interpreters from our ranks and recruit new talent.



As a question of racial equity both in terms of interpreter pay and access to justice, the Minnesota Judicial Branch payment policy restricts equal access to justice for people with limited English proficiency.



Small, women-owned and minority-owned businesses are negatively impacted by the Minnesota Judicial Branch's antiquated payment policies.

**INTERPRETERS ARE STRUGGLING:** It's almost impossible to make a living as a court interpreter. As a result, interpreters are leaving court work after receiving only a paltry 4% increase over the course of 23 years.



**ACTUAL INTERPRETER TAKE HOME PAY:** Pay after expenses (including mileage, insurance, gas, travel time, etc.) is **only \$10.40 - \$18.51**. This is not sustainable for interpreters who struggle to fill a 20-hour workweek.



**LIMITED HOURS:** The court scheduling and payment policies limit most interpreter sessions to a few hours per day. As a result, court interpreters can **usually only bill for about 20 hours** per week, assuming that they actually work both morning and afternoon sessions every day. Although, this is unusual for most interpreters and impossible for those who speak less common languages.



**LOSING INTERPRETERS:** Since we started tracking in 2019, the court interpreter roster experienced over a **20% loss in active interpreters**. Low pay in the courts is cited as the main factor in choosing other interpreting work.

# Support Your Partners in Criminal Justice

## Providing Professional Mandated Services for Criminal, Family, Juvenile, Civil

### BACKGROUND:

Judicial Interpreters bridge the linguistic gap in the Minnesota criminal and civil courts, state-funded domestic abuse service centers, state penitentiaries and holding cells, state and municipal government offices, and more.

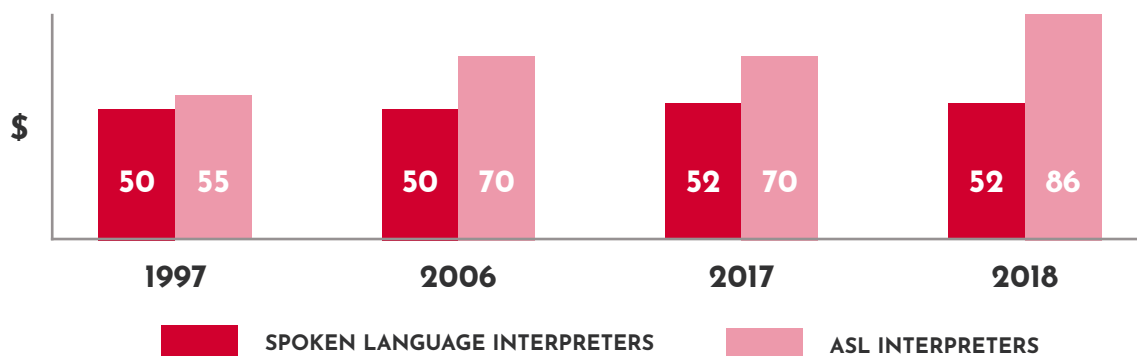
Without interpreters, both our judicial partners and limited English proficient immigrants and citizens cannot communicate. We provide professional, competent and indispensable services so that the executive and judicial branches of government function as smoothly as possible.

Here are some staggering facts on pay for mandated interpreter services:

- **MJB Started out strong!** - In 1997, the MJB set a competitive pay rate for spoken language interpreters. At that time, the rates set for interpreting services were \$50.00/hour for certified spoken language interpreters, \$40.00/hour for rostered interpreters, and \$55.00/hour for ASL interpreters.
- **Spoken Language Interpreters left behind while others see an increase** - Over the course of 23 years, pay for spoken language interpreters has only increased by \$2.00 (4%), while ASL interpreters have seen an increase of \$31, a 54% pay increase.
- **Never enough funding** - The State government has continuously underfunded the MJB, despite the court administrator's and the Judicial Counsel's best efforts to procure funding increases to properly compensate both staff employees and private contractors.

For the past five years, interpreters have been attempting to work with the Minnesota Judicial Branch to address concerns around the pay equity and working conditions of independently contracted interpreters.

The disparate treatment of spoken language interpreters reflects poorly on the Minnesota Judicial branch and the District Court's obligation to equal access to justice.



**The Ask: Will you support our bill to raise our 23-year long frozen wages?**