



Senate Bill 498

**AN ACT PROTECTING PAYCHECKS FOR PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS AND EXPANDING
PUBLIC ACCESS TO STATE PROGRAMS**

Testimony of the Department of Administrative Services

Human Services Committee

March 17, 2026

Good morning, Senator Lesser, Representative Gilchrest, Ranking Members Senator Perillo, Representative Case, and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee. I am Michelle Gilman, Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services (DAS). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **Section 6 of SB 498: An Act Protecting Paychecks for Personal Care Attendants and Expanding Public Access to State Programs.**

DAS appreciates the intent of Section 6 and supports its overarching goal of enhancing access and ensuring effective communication. We have no concerns with requiring that all agency communications comply with the federal standards for “effective communication” under 28 CFR 35.160. However, we must express significant concern that Section 6 goes far beyond those federal requirements.

Section 6 applies to all communications by any state agency or any contractor with a state agency, and to communications with both the public and employees. As drafted, this language is extremely broad. It captures online content, printed documents, call center scripts, emails, verbal communications, media materials, and even internal operational systems used by employees, such as electronic time-logging platforms. This scope creates interpretive challenges and could require translation of an enormous volume of materials that are not targeted to residents of any particular municipality.

The section also incorporates an election-specific framework. Under current practice, the Secretary of the State designates certain municipalities that must provide Spanish-language election materials. Section 6 would extend these municipality-specific designations to *all* agency communications, even though most state communications are statewide and not directed to residents of a single municipality. Present designations would require that all materials be available in English and Spanish, but future designations could significantly expand the required languages. This linkage to voting rights rules may unintentionally impose obligations well beyond the bill's intent.

Requiring agencies and all contractors to translate every communication into all designated languages would impose substantial staffing, operational, and financial burdens. Agencies continuously produce large volumes of communication across multiple platforms. Translation services alone are insufficient because Section 6 requires agencies to actually *make materials available* in each designated language, not merely offering interpretation upon request. Even for agencies already using multilingual web platforms (such as CT.gov, which supports up to 18 languages), significant challenges would remain for printed materials, forms, in-person interactions, and call center operations.

For these reasons, we oppose Section 6 as currently drafted. Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts with the Committee.