

October 12, 2026

Judicial Council of California
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

Re: Agenda item 26-145 (Court Interpreters, Changes to Certification Requirements)

To whom it may concern:

The Association of Independent Judicial Interpreters of California (AIJIC) is a nonprofit organization that represents freelance court interpreters with Judicial Council of California certification and registration.

We are contacting you to convey our opposition to the two-year carryover being considered for candidates to retain passing scores on individual sections of the Bilingual Interpreting Examination.

We oppose the proposal for the following reasons:

1. Interpretation skills are something that, if not used, decrease significantly. By giving candidates a two-year carryover to retake the failed portions of the certification exam without requiring them to retake the portions they already passed, it is very likely that the skills that allowed them to pass those portions the first time will be insufficient to meet passing standards two years later. In order to be fully qualified to pass the certification exam, candidates should prove that they have the skills to pass the three portions (simultaneous, consecutive and sight translation) in one exam sitting. The two-year carryover is excessive and should be limited to no more than six months.
2. The two-year carryover is being considered to expand the pool of qualified court interpreters, but the shortage of interpreters willing to work for the courts will continue if compensation offered by the courts isn't improved. Therefore, even if the pool of certified interpreters increases with the two-year carryover process, it's only a matter of time before the newly certified interpreters stop working for the courts in order to seek better compensation elsewhere.
3. The proposed two-year carryover will not strengthen language access in the California courts, quite the contrary, since it will create two different tiers of certified interpreters who were held to different standards in the certification exam.

We respectfully oppose the proposal in its current form and urge the Judicial Council to revise it to preserve the strict certification standards for court interpreters in California.
Sincerely,

AJJIC Board of Directors and Officers 2026:

- Mariana Bension-Larkin, Spanish California and Federally Certified Court Interpreter (President)
- Lorena Barrett, Spanish California and Federally Certified Court Interpreter (Secretary)
- Ana Sevilla, Spanish California Certified Court Interpreter (Treasurer)
- Sona Roesler, Eastern Armenian California Certified Court Interpreter