



## **LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN**

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**Department of Aviation/Houston Airport System**

January 31, 2014

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## PURPOSE

On July 31, 2013, Mayor Anise Parker signed Executive Order 1-17 under the authority of Article VI, Section 7a, of the City Charter of the City of Houston. The order mandates all City departments to establish policies for providing information about City services, programs, and activities to residents and visitors with limited English language proficiency (LEP).

In addition to the mandate presented by Executive Order 1-17, federal precedents exist for the provision of language access services and which are relevant to the City. The two main legal bases for language access are Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on national origin and 2000's Executive Order 13166, which affirms Title VI's language access requirement and outlines additional requirements. Any entity receiving federal support, even indirectly, is required to provide language access. Moreover, Title VI applies to a recipient's entire program or activity. This means all parts of a recipient's operations are covered, regardless of whether the recipient is only partially funded through federal funds. Language access requirements are therefore relevant to a wide variety of programs, services and activities provided by Houston city agencies.<sup>1</sup>

As per the requirements of Executive Order 1-17, the Aviation Department/Houston Airport System has prepared this Language Access Plan ("LAP" or "Plan") in order to create a set of protocols for providing meaningful access to DEPARTMENT services, programs, and activities (both written and orally communicated) to LEP individuals.

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<sup>1</sup> Executive Order 13166 can be found at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2000-08-16/pdf/00-20938.pdf> and related guidance on implementation of the federal Executive Order can be found at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2002-06-18/pdf/02-15207.pdf>

## DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

### About the Houston Airport System

The Houston Airport System provides a safe and dynamic air services network that fosters economic vitality for the transportation industry and the greater Houston region.

The Houston Airport System strives to ensure that its employment, services, and facilities are accessible to the public, customers, and travelers. To bring air service to Houston's population of more than 6 million, the Houston Airport System has three facilities; George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH), William P. Hobby Airport (HOU), and Ellington Airport (EFD). The three-airport system served more than 50 million passengers in 2013, including more than 8.9 million international travelers.

Together our airports form one of North America's largest public airport systems and position Houston as the international passenger and cargo gateway to the south central United States and a primary gateway to Latin America.

### Department Divisions

- Director's Office
- Commercial and Air Service Development
- Corporate Strategy
- Ellington Airport (EFD)
- External Affairs
- Finance
- George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH)
- Human Capital Management Division
- Information Technology
- Planning Design and Construction
- William P. Hobby Airport (HOU)

### Contact Information

#### Director

Mr. Mario C. Diaz  
16930 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Houston, TX 77032  
281-233-1877 | [Mario.Diaz@houstontx.gov](mailto:Mario.Diaz@houstontx.gov)

#### Language Access Coordinator

Ms. Željka Momirović  
16930 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Houston, TX 77032  
281-233-1952 | [Zeljka.Momirovic@houstontx.gov](mailto:Zeljka.Momirovic@houstontx.gov)

## KEY DEFINITIONS

**Essential Public Information:** As per the Executive Order, “Essential Public Information” is any information developed or used by the department and deemed vital for purposes of public safety, public health and economic development. This term is used interchangeably with the term “vital documents.”

**Interpretation & Translation:** Taken verbatim from the US Department of Homeland Security’s 2012 Language Access plan<sup>2</sup>:

“Interpretation involves *oral* communication. Translation involves *written* communication. Interpretation involves the immediate communication of meaning from one language into another. An interpreter conveys meaning orally, as a result, interpretation requires skills different from those needed for translation. Interpreting is a complex task that combines several abilities beyond language competence in order to enable delivery of an effective professional interpretation in a given setting. From the standpoint of the user, a successful interpretation is one that faithfully and accurately conveys the meaning of the source language orally, reflecting the style, register, and cultural context of the source message, without omissions, additions, or embellishments on the part of the interpreter. Professional interpreters are subject to specific codes of conduct and should be trained in interpretive skills, ethics, and subject-matter language. DHS Components utilizing the services of interpreters should request information about certification, assessments taken, qualifications, experience, and training. Interpreters may be physically present, or, in appropriate circumstances, may appear via videoconferencing or telephonically. When videoconferencing or telephonic interpretation are used, options include connecting directly to a specific professional interpreter with known qualifications, or using a company that provides telephonic interpretation services and has in place quality control and privacy safeguards. If bilingual staff is asked to interpret or translate, staff should be qualified to do so. Assessment of ability, training on interpreter ethics and standards, and clear policies, as noted below, that delineate appropriate use of bilingual staff, or contract interpreters and translators, will help ensure quality and effective use of resources.”<sup>3</sup>

**Language Access Coordinator:** These individuals are responsible for devising and ensuring that the Houston Airport System is in compliance with the Mayor’s Executive Order 1-17, and that their department adheres to its language access policy directives, plan and procedures to provide meaningful access to LEP persons. They also represent their departments on the City of Houston Language Access Task Force.

**Language Line/Telephone Interpreting:** This is a service that connects human interpreters via telephone to individuals who wish to speak to each other but do not share a common language. The telephone interpreter converts the spoken language from one language another, enabling listeners and speakers to understand each other. Interpretation over the telephone most often

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<sup>2</sup> Definition available on pages 2 and 3 of US Department of Homeland Security February 2011 Language Access Plan, available at: [http://www.lep.gov/guidance/040312\\_crcl-dhs-language-access-plan.pdf](http://www.lep.gov/guidance/040312_crcl-dhs-language-access-plan.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this language access plan, the term “DHS Components” in the definition can be substituted for “Agencies”

takes place in consecutive mode, which means that the interpreter waits until the speaker finishes an utterance before rendering the interpretation into the other language. Telephone interpreting is one modality or delivery mechanism for providing interpreting services. Other forms of delivering interpreting services include in-person interpreting and video interpreting for the deaf and hard of hearing. For the Houston Airport System, the service can be accessed through telephone service help line at no cost to constituents. The Houston Airport System is assessed a fee for utilizing the service. Fees are charged by the minute, and fees per language may differ.

**Limited English Proficient (LEP):** For the purposes of this plan and the activities to be undertaken in its execution, an LEP individual is someone who is not able to speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that allows him/her to interact effectively with DEPARTMENT staff. Individuals maintain the right to self-identify as a LEP person and should not in any circumstances be expected to pay for translation or interpretation services in order to effectively communicate with the department.

## LANGUAGES COVERED

Executive Order 1-17 mandates City agencies to provide essential public information in a *minimum* of the City's top five languages spoken by LEP individuals. Given the particular nature of interaction, both orally and in writing, the HAS has with the public, the HAS has determined that the following languages will be covered for translation and interpretation services:

Spanish  
Vietnamese  
Chinese  
Arabic  
Urdu

The top five languages in the above list might not necessarily cover the languages of all individuals seeking programs, services, and activities from the department. In an effort to avoid misperception of unequal services or uneven coverage of language access services to customers and passengers who speak languages not identified in the list, the department will allow the City-wide protocol for handling LEP individuals.

If a request is made for an essential document that is not available in the above list of languages, when feasible, the department will utilize the department's professional translation vendor or available in-house staff to translate the requested essential document. The decision to translate the document will be determined by the department director, or his/her language access representative.

The selection for the five languages was approved by the Mayor. The data is from the U.S. Census/American Language Survey. The list of languages with selection rationale by the Houston Planning Department is found in the Appendix.

## **LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES**

The Houston Airport System proposes a number of activities to fulfill its responsibilities under Executive Order 1-17. The sections below describe the Houston Airport System's approach to determining what to translate or provide interpretation services for; how to do this; and how to gauge whether the plan is working.

### **Translation of Essential Public Information and Vital Documents**

Under Executive Order 13166, signed on August 11, 2000, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is responsible for ensuring that LEP individuals have meaningful access to the benefits & services of airports receiving Federal financial assistance. *The FAA requires that airport sponsors identify possible LEP populations in their service area & determine the frequency in which these individuals interact with the airport.* These factors as well as the resources available to the airport sponsor will determine the level of language assistance the airport must provide. Addressing LEP is of particular importance to the FAA given the like hood that its recipients will encounter international & foreign travelers, who might have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand the English language.

### **Implementing Translation of Essential Public Information and Vital Documents**

In order to translate the essential public information outlined in the section above, the Houston Airport System will use the following resources and processes:

- 1) Documents will be translated using the HAS' approved vendor for professional translation/interpretation services or qualified interpreter on staff in accordance with procedures set out by the administration. List of bilingual/multilingual staff is updated by HAS' Human Capital Management section.
- 2) To ensure quality assurance, all documents that have been translated will be reviewed by the Language Access Coordinator and the department's expert in subject matter.
- 3) If the documents are approved for translation, then they will be made available to the public online in PDF format on the Department's webpage only when appropriate and required.
- 4) When feasible and required, the documents in print format will be made available in public areas.



## **Interpretation Services and Implementation**

Where the Houston Airport System conducts in-person or telephonic or otherwise orally-communicated business with the community, it will provide, when feasible, interpretation services for LEP individuals. It plans to do so by following the City's Administrative Procedure for handling LEP individuals. Refer to the Appendix for a copy of the administrative procedure.

Houston Airport System employees who routinely have direct, substantive interaction with the public (front-line employees) shall be trained in language access policies and procedures that shall include protocols for assisting LEP populations. Presently HAS provides in-person translation services at George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH) Federal Inspection Services Facility by twenty eight interpretation trained special services representatives who speak fourteen different languages (see Appendix). Telephone translation is available through Language Lines Service.

## **Monitoring, Evaluation & Documentation of Translation & Interpretation Program**

In order to ensure effective and efficient implementation of Houston Airport System's translation/interpretation plan, the HAS plans to conduct the following routine monitoring, evaluation, and documentation of the language access plan implementation. The HAS understands that this internal process can inform, but does not substitute, reporting requirements established under Executive Order 1-17 and that (will be or have been) shared with the HAS by the Mayor's designee.

Ensuring the quality of our language services is critical to communicating effectively with LEP individuals. Each division of HAS will be required to maintain records of all service requests received for written translation services and over-the-phone interpretation services. This information will be sent to the Department Director's designees at the end of each quarter. Monitoring on-site interpretation services will not be required for the purpose of keeping records due to high daily demands and services provided by HAS International Services and other bilingual or multilingual employees.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS & EMPLOYEE TRAINING**

The Houston Airport System understands that, under the requirements laid out in Executive Order 1-17, reporting requirements and employee training will be facilitated through the Mayor's designee, the Office of International Communities. These items (will be/have been) provided separately to the department based staff and field based personnel.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Per the Executive Order:

- 7.5.1 All Coordinators shall report plan progress, assessments and recommendations periodically to department heads and the Mayor's designee.
- 7.5.2 The Mayor's Designee will establish a reporting format, report submission interval and technical assistance to departments. Reporting logistics should be established within 6 months of this Executive Order.
- 7.5.3 The Mayor's Designee will work with the Coordinators to develop protocols used to measure the progress by the DEPARTMENT , as well as by feedback from the public constituencies with limited English proficiency served by the City DEPARTMENT .

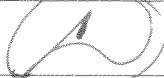

### **Staff Training**

Per the Executive Order:

- All HAS employees who routinely have direct, substantive interaction with the public (front- line employees) shall be trained in language access policies and procedures that shall include protocols for assisting LEP populations. Training shall be provided by the Mayor's designee.
- The Department will comply with all training requirements.

## APPROVAL SINGATURE PAGE

### DEPARTMENT SIGNATURES & CONTACTS

Title/Name	Signature	Contact Info
<i>For</i> Director: Mr. Mario C. Diaz		281-233-1877
Language Access Coordinator: Ms. Željka Momirović		281-233-1952

## APPENDIX

**Languages spoken by HAS International Services Representatives at IAH (2014):**

- 1) Arabic
- 2) Chinese
- 3) Dutch
- 4) French
- 5) German
- 6) Greek
- 7) Italian
- 8) Japanese
- 9) Lao
- 10) Portuguese
- 11) Russian
- 12) Spanish
- 13) Tigrinya
- 14) Vietnamese

**TOP FIVE LANGUAGES OF NEED SPOKEN IN HOUSTON**

# Ability to Speak English “Less Than Very Well” in City of Houston



**PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

Source: 2012 American Community Survey,  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Date: January 17, 2014

## Introduction

Data on ‘Language spoken at home by Ability to Speak English’ were derived from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates. The data includes only population 5 years and over who have the ability to speak a language. This data is collected in an effort to measure the current use of languages other than English. The ACS collects information from a large annual sample of approximately 3 million housing unit addresses and therefore provides more reliable statistics. The usefulness of the self-rated English-speaking ability question was established in the 1980s.

Respondents were instructed to print the name of the non-English language spoken at home. If the person spoke more than one language other than English, the person was to report the language spoken more often.

## City of Houston

English-speaking ability varied widely among the speakers of the top ten languages spoken in the City of Houston. The top ten languages spoken in Houston are: English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, French or Creole, Urdu, Arabic, Hindi, and Tagalog (Philippines) and Korean.

The Census Bureau distinguishes the ability to speak English between “Very Well” and “Less Than Very Well”. In Houston, the “Less Than Very Well” category ranked numerically are, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic, Urdu, Korean, French or Creole, Hindi, and Tagalog (Philippines). Those who speak “Less Than Very Well” category varies between 397,429 persons (Spanish) being the highest and 1,551 persons (Philippines-Tagalog) being the lowest. The higher proportion indicates that they have a huge difficulty in conveying information clearly in English from normal conversations to obtaining assistance from non-profit organizations, Government etc.

**Recommended 5 Languages based on numerical rank are (Speak English “Less than Very Well”): Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic and Urdu.**

**Language Spoken at Home (Other than English)  
City of Houston**

	Speak English “Less Than Very Well”	Speak English “Very Well”	Total
Spanish or Creole	397,429	332,099	729,528
Vietnamese	21,584	11,701	33,285
Chinese	13,521	10,765	24,286
Arabic	3,324	5,256	8,580
Urdu	2,783	5,090	7,873
Korean	2,498	2,174	4,672
French or Creole	2,486	7,959	10,445
Hindi	2,041	6,162	8,203
Tagalog (Philippines)	1,551	5,434	6,985

## **ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS**





# CITY OF HOUSTON

## Executive Order

Subject: **Language Access**

E.O. No:

1-17

Effective Date:

July 31, 2013

### 1. AUTHORITY

1.1 Article VI, Section 7a, City Charter of the City of Houston.

### 2. PURPOSE

2.1 Establish policies for providing information about City services, programs and activities to residents and visitors with limited English language proficiency (LEP).

### 3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 Houston is an international city of commerce, culture, trade, travel, and tourism. Over 100 different languages are spoken in Houston's neighborhoods. All Houston residents and visitors, regardless of their proficiency level in English, should have access to essential public information about City programs, services and activities.

3.2 While continuous efforts shall be maintained by implementing and expounding on a department's language access protocols, it is understood that this multiphase process shall be enacted and improved upon over an extended period of time.

### 4. SCOPE

4.1 This policy applies to all City departments.

### 5. DEFINITIONS:

*Essential Public Information* - Any information developed or used by the department and deemed vital for purposes of public safety, public health and economic development.

### 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 All City departments that provide services directly to the public shall designate a Language Access Coordinator (Coordinator) within 60-days of this Executive Order to effect the creation and execution of the department's Language Access policy and implementation plan. The Coordinators will serve as their department's liaison, and they will work regularly with the Mayor's language access designee.

Approved:

Date Approved:

07/31/2013

Page 1 of 2

6.2 The Mayor's Office Language Access Designee shall be the Office of International Communities, which shall assist in the provision of language services to the public and will provide technical assistance to City departments in providing such services

## 7. POLICY

7.1 When feasible, the City shall begin implementing essential public information for a minimum of the top 5 commonly-used languages utilized by the City's culturally diverse population. The City will depend on a variety of relevant sources (example: US Census) to determine the commonly-used languages. The information will be available via effective communications channels, including but not limited to the City's website at <http://www.houstontx.gov/>.

7.2 All City departments that provide services directly to the public shall provide information about LEP services by developing and implementing department or agency-specific language access plans shall be submitted to the Mayor's Office within six months of the issuance of this Executive Order.

7.3 Each department will receive, from the Mayor's language access designee, technical assistance and resources to assist in the development and implementation of their language access plan.

7.4 City employees who routinely have direct, substantive interaction with the public (front-line employees) shall be trained in language access policies and procedures that shall include protocols for assisting LEP populations. Training shall be provided by the Mayor's designee.

### 7.5 Reporting

7.5.1 All Coordinators shall report plan progress, assessments and recommendations periodically to department heads and the Mayor's designee.

7.5.2 The Mayor's Designee will establish a reporting format, report submission interval and technical assistance to departments. Reporting logistics should be established within 6 months of this Executive Order.

7.5.3 The Mayor's Designee will work with the Coordinators to develop protocols used to measure the progress by the department, as well as by feedback from the public constituencies with limited English proficiency served by the City department.

## Office of Civil Rights Title VI Program

The Title VI Airport Nondiscrimination Compliance Program is complex & imposes on all of us, a special responsibility to ensure that it is administered in a fair, equitable & effective manner.

This brochure focuses on three areas:

- (1) Title VI Program
- (2) Limited English Proficiency
- (3) Environmental Justice

As we move forward, we must remember that the program is based on the premise that airports are required to ensure nondiscrimination within their area of responsibility. In addition to ensuring the civil rights of the flying public, these protections also extend to tenants, individuals who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) & minority & low-income populations impacted by Environmental Justice (EJ) issues.

Additionally, the FAA Office of Civil Rights, investigates & renders decisions on Title VI complaints, conducts National Title VI Training Conferences at various locations nationwide, & provides training to airport sponsors & staff Title VI, LEP & EJ.



## FAA Office of Civil Rights Contact Information

Title VI Airport  
Nondiscrimination Compliance Program  
718-553-3295

Federal Aviation Administration  
Eastern Region Headquarters, AEA-9  
1 Aviation Plaza  
Jamaica, New York 11434  
•••••

Office of Civil Rights Headquarters  
202-267-8087

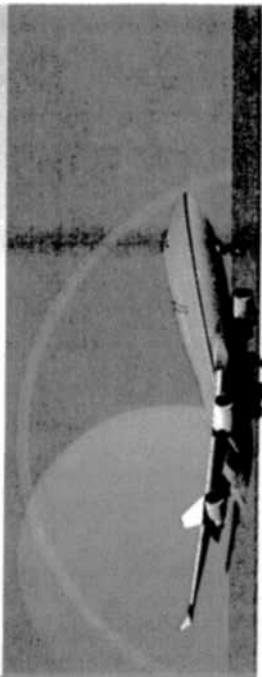
Federal Aviation Administration  
Office of Civil Rights  
ACR-1, Room 1030  
800 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20591  
•••••

**NOTE:** All links in this brochure can be accessed by choosing the appropriate topic from the FAA Office of Civil Rights website at [http://www.faa.gov/about/office\\_org/headquarters\\_offices/acr/com\\_civ\\_support/](http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/acr/com_civ_support/)



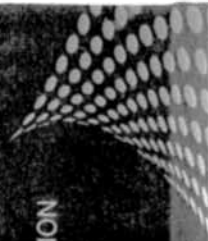
U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal Aviation  
Administration

## Title VI Airport Nondiscrimination Compliance



ACHIEVING SAFETY THROUGH DIVERSITY

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
Office of Civil Rights



## Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color or national origin under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Title 49 of the USC section 47123, "Nondiscrimination," further prohibits airports, who receive airport improvement program funding, from engaging in discrimination based on sex & religion. Under these laws, airports are required to take affirmative action to ensure that there is nondiscrimination in all of their operations, including but not limited to:
  - Their local & state funded contracting program
  - The benefits & services provided by their tenants, air carriers, concessionaires & fixed based operations
  - Employment activities related to programs receiving Federal financial assistance

→ The airport's requirement to conspicuously display non-discrimination posters at their airports, notifying the flying public of their rights

→ The airport's obligation to address Limited English Proficiency & Environmental Justice in its planning & operation

### Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Under Executive Order 13166, signed on August 11, 2000, the FAA is responsible for ensuring that LEP individuals have meaningful access to the benefits & services of airports receiving Federal financial assistance. The FAA requires that airport sponsors identify possible LEP populations in their service area & determine the frequency in which these individuals interact with the airport. These factors as well as the resources available to the airport sponsor will determine the level of language assistance the airport must provide. Addressing LEP is of particular importance to the FAA given the likelihood that

its recipients will encounter international & foreign travelers who might have a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand the English language.

### Environmental Justice (EJ)

Executive DOT Order 12898, signed on February 11, 1994, requires Federal agencies to achieve EJ by identifying & addressing disproportionately high & adverse human health & environmental effects, including interrelated social & economic effects, of their programs, policies & activities on minority populations & low-income populations.

DOT Order 5610.2, EJ for Minority Populations & Low Income Populations, describes the process for incorporating EJ principles into all existing DOT programs, policies & activities. Therefore, airport sponsors must take into consideration EJ impacts to surrounding populations regarding airport noise, airport construction or other adverse human health & environmental effects.

## Most Frequently Used Links

### Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

49 CFR Part 21  
[http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Ttitle49/49cfr21\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Ttitle49/49cfr21_main_02.tpl)

### 49 USC Section 47123 Nondiscrimination

<http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/byagency/dot47123.php>

### DOJ Title VI Portal

<http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/coord/ttitlevi.php>

### FAA Title VI Portal

[http://www.faa.gov/about/office\\_org/headquarters\\_offices/acr/com\\_civ\\_support/non\\_disc\\_pi/](http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/acr/com_civ_support/non_disc_pi/)

FAA is responsible for investigating complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex & religion in federally assisted programs.

### Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Limited English Proficiency  
 A Federal Interagency Website  
<http://www.lep.gov/>

### DOT Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to LEP Persons

(70 Federal Register 74087 [December 14, 2005])  
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2005-12-14/pdf/05-23972.pdf>

### Sample "I Speak" Card

<http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/Pubs/ISpeakCards.pdf>



## Filing a Complaint

If you believe you or others have been subjected to discrimination, you may file a complaint. A signed, written complaint should be filed within 180 days of the date of the alleged discrimination.

### Environmental Justice (EJ)

#### DOT Order 5610.2 on EJ

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-1997-04-15/pdf/97-9684.pdf>

#### FAA Order 1050.1E, CHG 1 Environmental Impacts: Policies & Procedures

[http://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/order/energy\\_orders/1050-1E.pdf](http://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/order/energy_orders/1050-1E.pdf)

#### Environmental Desk Reference for Airport Actions

(Chapter 10: Environmental Justice)  
[http://www.faa.gov/airports/environmental/environmental\\_desk\\_ref/](http://www.faa.gov/airports/environmental/environmental_desk_ref/)

Please submit your written complaint to the Washington, DC address on the back of this brochure.

HAS use only



1-866-874-3972

XXXXXX

- ◆ Brief the Interpreter.
- ◆ Press 1 for Spanish or 2 for other languages.
- ◆ Say "End of Call" to the Interpreter when finished.

LANGUAGELINE.COM

HAS use only



1-866-874-3972

XXXXXX

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LANGUAGELINE.COM

TOP OF THE NEWS

Nation | World

» Surveillance: Investigating one terror suspect can ensnare millions of Americans. A3  
 » Syria: President looks to Instagram to boost his image. A14

City & State

» Twitter: Another State poller demands records from two areas accused of smearing threats amid the abortion debate. B1  
 » Galveston: College moves to fire controversial professor. B3

Business

» Working: Cabinetist L.M. Stiel is impressed by her colleague's networking know-how. D1  
 » John: Texas is becoming more white-collar. D1

Star

» Come on in: Lobbies at Williams Tower and Allen Center host art shows. E1

29-95

» Think a reservation? Restaurant weeks is here. F12



Karen Moore/Houston Chronicle

Sports

Starting over, again

» Astros: After trading away their top starter, Bud Norris (left) and outfielder Justin Starvo (right) for more prospects, the team has hit rock bottom — which is the plan, says Randy Harvey. C1  
 » Tomans: LB for Mays is welcomed by ace teammates despite a hit they couldn't forget. C1

# HOUSTON CHRONICLE

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## Poe, Culberson joust over light rail

Shift in congressional district lines adds Humble player to the conflict

By Dag Bagley

A long-disputed, fiercely debated light rail line between the University of Houston and the Uptown area remains shelved for lack of funding, but the project gained an important ally Tuesday in Washington. Rep. Ted Poe, R-Humble, whose district shifted earlier

this year to include portions of the area where the planned University Line would run along Richardson Avenue, said slow-to-clear construction by his voters as well as strong on-line responses demonstrate his constituents support the line. In remarks Tuesday on the House floor, Poe said 604 respondents to a Facebook so-

lution supported the rail line, compared to 340 opposed to it. "We're not saying it is ac-cidental, but it does help let me know what people are think-ing," Poe said. "I believe the area I represent wants light rail." Poe's district includes Richardson from Main Street to Shepherd Drive. The alignment west of Shepherd lies within the district of Rep. John Culberson, R-Houston, one of the rail line's most formidable and implacable foes.



U.S. Rep. Ted Poe



U.S. Rep. John Culberson

Light rail battle

» When do you support in the issue of federal funding for Metro's light rail, Ted Poe or John Culberson? Like our Facebook page, then let us know at [chron.com/railbattle](http://chron.com/railbattle)

Rail line continues on A12

DIVERSITY



Houstonians speak approximately 200 languages, and while roughly half are bilingual, many are not proficient in English.

## Houston to spread the word in English, 5 more languages

Mayor says program recognizes city's fast-growing foreign-born population

By Allen Turner

With more than a quarter of its 2.3 million residents foreign born, Houston took a step in recognizing its language as an international city Wednesday as Mayor Annise Parker launched a program to disseminate brochures and other important information in five non-English languages.

tion and which languages should be featured in the effort. The program is to begin in six months, she said. Parker said the program will focus on languages whose speakers are in most need of translation services, not necessarily the most frequently spoken languages. "The city already does just about everything in Spanish," she said. "Houston also has a significant South Asian population, Polish and Italian, and Hindi is a commonly spoken language. But many Hindi

How many speak what Houston is working to identify groups who would benefit from a plain to politicians city information in foreign languages. Following is the U.S. Census Bureau's list of the larger bilingual Houston groups and the number of their members who speak English less than very well.

Spanish	397,252	Indic languages other than Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati	3,647
Chinese	13,608	Arabic	3,383
Vietnamese	22,362		

Source: U.S. Census

FEDERAL COURT

## Judge slams feds' 'inept' drug probe

By Danae Schiller

A federal judge in Houston publicly slapped the Department of Justice for an "inept investigation" into \$73 million in suspected drug money, and he likely ended an eight-year probe by refusing to grant the U.S. government more time to get its hands on Mexican bank records. U.S. District Judge Lynn N. Hughes' ruling alone even more so as he gave prosecutors 24 hours to notify the targets of the investigation that they have been under scrutiny, then yanking away the veil of

JOHN GRAVES: 1920-2013



John Graves drew critical praise for his enduring classic "Goodbye to a River."

## A distinctive voice of Texas

By Joe Holey

John Graves, a Texas writer whose quietly beautiful, deeply personal book about a canoe trip down the Brazos River in the late 1950s remains a classic, died Tuesday at Wood Scribble, his small farm outside Glen Rose. The dean of Texas letters and a mentor and influence for many Texas writers, he was 93 and had been in declining health for several years. Graves wrote several books about Texas rural life, nature and the environment, but his "Goodbye to a River" is the one that endures. The late historian A.C. Graves continues on A12

In his words  
 » In 1996, John Graves sat down with the Chronicle in a wide-ranging interview about his writing career. Read what he said at [houstonchronicle.com/johnreview](http://houstonchronicle.com/johnreview)