



NEWS RELEASE

Arizona Legislature

Speaker of the House Rusty Bowers (R-25)

Senate President Karen Fann (R-1)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arizona State Legislature Implements Advanced Closed Captioning System for Official Proceedings

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – House Speaker Rusty Bowers and Senate President Karen Fann today announced that the Arizona Legislature has implemented a new smart automated captioning system of official proceedings for the public when viewed online. The new captioning system greatly improves accessibility over the limited captioning previously available and will be used on the Legislature’s azleg.gov website for all floor proceedings and committee meetings.

“Ensuring public access and transparency in what we do in the Legislature is critically important. We’re pleased to announce that the Legislature will now utilize an AI-based automatic speech recognition (ASR) to generate closed captioning for viewers. This technology is highly-accurate and much faster than previous captioning systems, and it will enable citizens, especially those who may be deaf or hard of hearing, to better follow legislative proceedings and their elected legislators at the state capitol.”

The Legislature worked closely with the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (ACDHH) to identify and implement this new ASR system.

“ACDHH appreciates the ongoing partnership with the State Legislature to continually provide solutions to ensure communication accessibility and access for the more than 1.1 million Arizonans who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind,” said Sherri Collins, Executive Director of ACDHH. **“To know that any of us who have varying hearing levels (Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind) who want to participate in the State Legislature proceedings at any time by going online, just as a hearing person can, is a wonderful step forward in ensuring government is open to all of its residents.”**

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