

House Bill 535 - Maryland Sign Language Interpreters Act
sponsored by Delegate Acevero

Madam Chairperson and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee:

My name is Dr. Clifton Langdon. I am a Deaf individual and live in Mount Rainier, MD. I am writing this testimony to ask you to support **HB535 - Maryland Sign Language Interpreter Act of 2021** sponsored by Delegate Acevero.

Interpreters hold the power of human connection and many times in my life I have been in vulnerable positions in which I do not know if I have any recourse if something were to go wrong. I have encountered "interpreters" who are not trained and do not understand basic tenets of the field of interpretation. I have taught interpreters at college and I am married to an interpreter. As such, I am very familiar with all that goes into being an interpreter. This licensure bill will go a long way in ensuring that interpreters and consumers are both protected and that there is a transparent process that can ensure residents of Maryland like myself can be safer with interpreters that are licensed to facilitate person-to-person connections.

This bill would require licensure for sign language interpreters working in the state of Maryland and help to ensure that members of the Deaf community have access to qualified interpreters. When unqualified interpreters are allowed to work unchecked, the impact on the communities they serve can be a matter of life or death. This bill provides both a mechanism for licensing interpreters and a means for relief in the form of a grievance process.

As a constituent, I ask you to please support HB535.

Sincerely,

Dr. Clifton Langdon

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