



**TESTIMONY FOR HB0950  
JUDGES – COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINING**

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Washington

**Committee:** Judiciary

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0950 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members feel that judges, given their position and power they have to affect the course of a person's life, should be beyond reproach. We are also aware that everyone has their own biases, and that those biases can lead to a lack of empathy and understanding of people of other races and cultures. It makes good sense to us to provide training for judges in implicit bias and antidiscrimination, along with techniques that will help judges understand these biases and how to deal with them.

This bill, if passed, would require all judges to receive training to address implicit bias, antiracial bias, antidiscrimination and anti-blackness bias, as well as techniques for procedural justice and reconciliation. We believe this is a good first step in providing necessary training and also gaining an understanding where we need to go from here.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.