

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 370
Educational Interpreter – Certification Requirements**

**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Thursday, March 3rd, 2022
1:00 p.m.**

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The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 370, which would require the State Board of Education and the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board to develop certain rules and regulations for the certification of educational interpreters.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students for the careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

MSEA is dedicated to ensuring that all our children receive a world class public education; one that prepares them for college, career, and life. This is especially true for our most vulnerable students, including those who are differently abled. Our students who are deaf and hard of hearing deserve unfettered access to the content and skills essential for college and career readiness. Unfortunately, much like the case with English Learners, our deaf and hard of hearing students communicate in a different language than that of their classroom teachers. Classroom teachers, therefore, must rely on educational interpreters (EIs) to assist in translating that which our hearing students are receiving to our deaf and hard of hearing students. Without this support, our schools are unable to provide access to the Free Appropriate Public Education to which our differently abled deaf and hard of hearing students have a right. This is unacceptable.



MSEA believes that all of us have a role to play in providing our students with the services, supports and resources they need to be successful. This legislation will ensure that a significant player in the process is well equipped to execute their responsibility to ensure fair access to all of Maryland's students.

We urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 370.