



Maryland Independent College
and University Association

Written Support

House Ways and Means Committee

Senate Bill 370 (King) Education – Educational Interpreter – Certification Requirements

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On behalf of Maryland's independent colleges and universities and the 58,000 students we serve, thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in support of *Senate Bill 370 (King) Education - Educational Interpreter - Certification Requirements*. This legislation would create new requirements for educational interpreters who work in Maryland public schools.

Senate Bill 370 would create certification standards for educational interpreters to help protect the integrity of the educational experience for students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. All K-12 students deserve the opportunity to be educated by professionals with specialized academic and professional training and credentials. Unlike the majority of other states, Maryland does not currently have certification standards for educational interpreters. For many students, interpreters are a primary source of information both inside and outside of the classroom.

One of the MICUA member institutions, McDaniel College, is dedicated to preparing Deaf Education professionals through both undergraduate and graduate program offerings. McDaniel has offered a renowned Master of Science in Deaf Education program for several decades, preparing teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels. Additionally, McDaniel offers an undergraduate major in American Sign Language (ASL) Studies and offers a bachelor's degree in ASL. As referenced in McDaniel's testimony, the College is committed to supporting the implementation of SB 370 through expanding its Deaf Education program offerings.

For all of these reasons, MICUA requests a favorable Committee report for Senate Bill 370.