

Good afternoon, Chair and Vice Chair of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee/ Appropriations Committee and members of the Committee. My name is Blaise Delahoussaye. I live in Rockville, MD.

I am DeafBlind.

I am here in support of SB 185; the Co-Navigation bill. This bill is important because it will give DeafBlind people in Maryland greater independence without relying on family members and/or friends.

Passing this bill will improve my life by having less barriers such as giving testimonials in the future without relying on my friends as a favor. Due to my privacy, I can go for medical and legal appointments effectively with trained co-navigators. In addition, I will be able to go grocery shopping for my family and take me to the airports for family visits globally. Lastly, this will provide me with an opportunity to access everything and greater confidence and productivity in my daily life.

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. I ask for a favorable report on SB 185.