



MLSC

MARYLAND LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

IOLTA - INTEREST ON LAWYER TRUST ACCOUNTS

Senate Bill 252

Maryland Legal Services Corporation – Board of Directors – Expansion

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Hearing Date: January 29, 2026

Position: Favorable

Maryland Legal Services Corporation (“MLSC”) respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 252, which would expand the MLSC Board of Directors from nine to twelve members.

MLSC’s mission is to ensure low-income Marylanders have access to stable, efficient, and effective civil legal assistance through the distribution of funds to nonprofit legal services organizations across the state. The Maryland General Assembly created MLSC in 1982 to administer the state’s Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program, and since that time MLSC grantees have assisted millions of Marylanders with a wide variety of civil legal needs.

In recent years, MLSC has experienced historic growth in both the amount of funding it distributes and the scope of its statutory responsibilities. The number of MLSC grantees has grown from just five organizations in 1986 to more than fifty today, with sixteen new grantees added in the last five years alone. In 2022, MLSC was also named the administrator and funder of the Access to Counsel in Evictions Program, further expanding the Board’s oversight responsibilities.

The MLSC Board of Directors is responsible for approving all grant awards and ensuring fiscal accountability and effective governance. As the number and diversity of programs and grantees have increased, it has become increasingly difficult for a nine-member board to carry out these duties at the depth and level of engagement required. Expanding the Board to twelve members would distribute the workload more equitably and allow MLSC to benefit from a broader range of perspectives and expertise. Furthermore, Senate Bill 252 would have no fiscal impact on the State nor on small businesses.

For these reasons, Maryland Legal Services Corporation strongly supports Senate Bill 252 and respectfully urges a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Michelle Siri, Executive Director, at msiri@mlsc.org or 443-961-5596.