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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 29, 2026

The Maryland State Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 252 – Maryland Legal Services Corporation – Board of Directors – Membership

Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am here to introduce Senate Bill 252. This legislation would increase the number of members of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) from nine to twelve voting members, along with some other minor changes regarding how many voting members must be admitted to the Maryland Bar or consist of nonlawyers. While this is all we are asking for, it is a necessary update on the law. The amount of work and oversight for MLSC has consistently increased over the years. However, the number of board members has never increased, and the board has an important job. The board is responsible for approving all grant awards and meeting with grantees as part of its oversight function. As the number and diversity of MLSC's grantees have grown, it is increasingly difficult for nine board members to manage the necessary engagement and review processes. Expanding the board to twelve members would distribute the workload more equitably and provide a broader range of perspective and expertise.

I appreciate the Committee's consideration of Senate Bill 252 and will be happy to answer any questions.