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**TESTIMONY ON HB#/0297- POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**Adult Education - High School Diploma Pathways - GED Option Pilot Program and MDiplomaWorks Pathway**

**TO:** Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and members of the Ways and Means Committee  
**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0297, **Adult Education - High School Diploma Pathways - GED Option Pilot Program and MDiplomaWorks Pathway**

This bill seeks to create a pilot program to help ensure more of the residents of Maryland have a path to earning a GED diploma as a pathway to prepare for postsecondary education or entry into the workforce. The GED Testing Service lists four reasons to acquire a GED. <sup>1</sup>

1. Get accepted to college
2. Gain a competitive edge in the job market
3. Increase potential salary earnings
4. Personal achievement

The bill accomplishes this by establishing the GED Option Pilot Program to expand the GED Option Program to students beyond English language learners to ensure a pathway for students to obtain a high school diploma and prepare for postsecondary education or the workforce. It will require the Maryland Department of Labor to establish criteria to select certain local school systems for participation in the Program and establish the MDiplomaWorks pathway as an alternative method of earning a high school diploma in the State, etc.

If Maryland is to ensure an educated workforce motivated to achieve with the resultant economic benefits to the state and the individual this bill offers a path to achieve this result.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0297.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ged.com/blog/why-is-getting-a-ged-so-important-top-4-reasons-you-should-get-your-ged.html>