
By: **Delegates McDonough, Impallaria, Jennings, and Weir**

Introduced and read first time: February 10, 2006

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Baltimore County - English Language - Formal Recognition**

3 FOR the purpose of designating the English language as the official language of
4 Baltimore County; making provisions of this Act applicable to certain Baltimore
5 County functions and agencies; providing for certain exceptions; providing that
6 this Act may not be construed to require the translation into English of any
7 official motto or slogan; making provisions of this Act severable; and generally
8 relating to the designation of English as the official language of Baltimore
9 County.

10 BY adding to

11 Article 24 - Political Subdivisions - Miscellaneous Provisions
12 Section 20-101 to be under the new title "Title 20. Official Language of
13 Baltimore County"
14 Annotated Code of Maryland
15 (2005 Replacement Volume)

16 Preamble

17 WHEREAS, Baltimore County is comprised of people from many ethnic,
18 cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, all of whom have contributed to this County the
19 richness of their heritages; and

20 WHEREAS, Baltimore County has been greatly enriched by this diversity, and
21 the government should always take steps to promote the dignity of all the heritages
22 that form this County's pluralistic society; and

23 WHEREAS, It is not the purpose of this Act nor may this Act be construed to
24 infringe on the rights of citizens to exercise the use of a language of their choice for
25 private conduct; now, therefore,

26 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
27 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article 24 - Political Subdivisions - Miscellaneous Provisions

TITLE 20. OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF BALTIMORE COUNTY.

3 20-101.

4 (A) (1) ENGLISH IS RECOGNIZED AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF
5 BALTIMORE COUNTY.

6 (2) AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, ENGLISH IS
7 THE LANGUAGE OF THE COUNTY AGENCIES AND FUNCTIONS SUBJECT TO THE
8 PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION.

9 (B) THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION APPLY TO:

10 (1) FUNCTIONS OF BALTIMORE COUNTY AGENCIES THAT:

11 (I) WERE CREATED OR AUTHORIZED BY PUBLIC GENERAL LAWS
12 OTHER THAN THE EXPRESS POWERS ACT;

13 (II) WERE CREATED OR AUTHORIZED BY PUBLIC LOCAL LAWS ON
14 MATTERS THAT FALL OUTSIDE AREAS COVERED BY THE EXPRESS POWERS ACT; OR

15 (III) ARE STATE FUNCTIONS DELEGATED TO THE AGENCIES BY THE
16 STATE; AND

17 (2) QUASI-STATE AGENCIES IN BALTIMORE COUNTY THAT WERE
18 CREATED BY STATE LAW INCLUDING:

19 (I) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE;

20 (II) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS;

21 (III) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION;

22 (IV) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES;
23 AND

24 (V) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

25 (C) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, THE COUNTY
26 AGENCIES AND FUNCTIONS SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION SHALL:

27 (1) WRITE AND PUBLISH EACH OFFICIAL DOCUMENT IN ENGLISH; AND

28 (2) CONDUCT EACH MEETING AND OTHER OFFICIAL ORAL
29 COMMUNICATION IT AUTHORIZES IN ENGLISH.

30 (D) THE COUNTY AGENCIES AND FUNCTIONS SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS
31 OF THIS SECTION MAY CONDUCT AFFAIRS IN A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH
32 TO:

- 1 (1) COMPLY WITH FEDERAL LAW;
- 2 (2) PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY;
- 3 (3) PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CIVIL LITIGANTS, CRIMINAL DEFENDANTS,
4 OR VICTIMS OF CRIME;
- 5 (4) ASSIST STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PROFICIENT IN THE ENGLISH
6 LANGUAGE BY PROVIDING ENGLISH INSTRUCTION TO FACILITATE AS RAPIDLY AS
7 POSSIBLE A TRANSITION TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE;
- 8 (5) PROVIDE INTERPRETATION FOR DEAF INDIVIDUALS IN AMERICAN
9 SIGN LANGUAGE;
- 10 (6) TEACH A FOREIGN LANGUAGE;
- 11 (7) PROMOTE THE ARTS, INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE, OR TOURISM; OR
- 12 (8) ASSIST PERSONS WHO ARE NOT PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH IN THE
13 CONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS.
- 14 (E) THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO REQUIRE THE TRANSLATION
15 INTO ENGLISH OF ANY OFFICIAL MOTTO OR SLOGAN.

16 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That if any provision of this
17 Act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid for any
18 reason in a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity does not affect other
19 provisions or any other application of this Act which can be given effect without the
20 invalid provision or application, and for this purpose the provisions of this Act are
21 declared severable.

22 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
23 October 1, 2006.