

# HOUSE BILL 771

L2  
HB 1337/06 – HGO

71r2224

---

By: **Delegate McDonough**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2007

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 and 2006 Supplement)

16 Preamble

17 WHEREAS, Baltimore County comprises people from many ethnic, cultural,  
18 and linguistic backgrounds, all of whom have contributed to this county the richness of  
19 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

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

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

6 **Article 24 – Political Subdivisions – Miscellaneous Provisions**

7 **TITLE 20. OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF BALTIMORE COUNTY.**

8 **20-101.**

9 (A) (1) **ENGLISH IS RECOGNIZED AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF**  
10 **BALTIMORE COUNTY.**

11 (2) **AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF BALTIMORE COUNTY,**  
12 **ENGLISH IS THE LANGUAGE OF THE COUNTY AGENCIES AND FUNCTIONS**  
13 **SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION.**

14 (B) **THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION APPLY TO:**

15 (1) **FUNCTIONS OF BALTIMORE COUNTY AGENCIES THAT:**

16 (I) **WERE CREATED OR AUTHORIZED BY PUBLIC GENERAL**  
17 **LAWS OTHER THAN THE EXPRESS POWERS ACT;**

18 (II) **WERE CREATED OR AUTHORIZED BY PUBLIC LOCAL**  
19 **LAWS ON MATTERS THAT FALL OUTSIDE AREAS COVERED BY THE EXPRESS**  
20 **POWERS ACT; OR**

21 (III) **ARE STATE FUNCTIONS DELEGATED TO THE AGENCIES**  
22 **BY THE STATE; AND**

23 (2) **QUASI-STATE AGENCIES IN BALTIMORE COUNTY THAT WERE**  
24 **CREATED BY STATE LAW INCLUDING:**

25 (I) **THE BALTIMORE COUNTY STATE’S ATTORNEY’S**  
26 **OFFICE;**

- 1                   **(II) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS;**
- 2                   **(III) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION;**
- 3                   **(IV) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL**  
4 **SERVICES; AND**
- 5                   **(V) THE BALTIMORE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT.**

6           **(C) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, THE**  
7 **COUNTY AGENCIES AND FUNCTIONS SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS**  
8 **SECTION SHALL:**

9                   **(1) WRITE AND PUBLISH EACH OFFICIAL DOCUMENT IN ENGLISH;**  
10 **AND**

11                   **(2) CONDUCT EACH MEETING AND OTHER OFFICIAL ORAL**  
12 **COMMUNICATION IT AUTHORIZES IN ENGLISH.**

13           **(D) THE COUNTY AGENCIES AND FUNCTIONS SUBJECT TO THE**  
14 **PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION MAY CONDUCT AFFAIRS IN A LANGUAGE OTHER**  
15 **THAN ENGLISH TO:**

16                   **(1) COMPLY WITH FEDERAL LAW;**

17                   **(2) PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY;**

18                   **(3) PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CIVIL LITIGANTS, CRIMINAL**  
19 **DEFENDANTS, OR VICTIMS OF CRIME;**

20                   **(4) ASSIST STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT PROFICIENT IN THE**  
21 **ENGLISH LANGUAGE BY PROVIDING ENGLISH INSTRUCTION TO FACILITATE AS**  
22 **RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE A TRANSITION TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE;**

23                   **(5) PROVIDE INTERPRETATION FOR DEAF INDIVIDUALS IN**  
24 **AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE;**

25                   **(6) TEACH A FOREIGN LANGUAGE;**

1                   **(7) PROMOTE THE ARTS, INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE, OR**  
2 **TOURISM; OR**

3                   **(8) ASSIST PERSONS WHO ARE NOT PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH IN**  
4 **THE CONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS.**

5                   **(E) THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO REQUIRE THE**  
6 **TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH OF ANY OFFICIAL MOTTO OR SLOGAN.**

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

13                   SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
14 October 1, 2007.