

HOUSE BILL 1020

L2

0lr2631

By: **Delegates McDonough, Jennings, Impallaria, James, McComas, Norman, Riley, and Stifler**

Introduced and read first time: February 15, 2010

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Harford County – English Language – Formal Recognition**

3 FOR the purpose of designating the English language as the official language of
4 Harford County; making provisions of this Act applicable to certain Harford
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 the provisions of this Act severable; and
8 generally relating to the designation of English as the official language of
9 Harford County.

10 BY adding to

11 Article 24 – Political Subdivisions – Miscellaneous Provisions

12 Section 22–101 to be under the new title “Title 22. Official Language of Harford
13 County”

14 Annotated Code of Maryland

15 (2005 Replacement Volume and 2009 Supplement)

16 Preamble

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

20 WHEREAS, Harford 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,

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

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

4 **TITLE 22. OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF HARFORD COUNTY.**

5 **22-101.**

6 (A) (1) ENGLISH IS RECOGNIZED AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF
7 HARFORD COUNTY.

8 (2) AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF HARFORD COUNTY,
9 ENGLISH IS THE LANGUAGE OF THE COUNTY AGENCIES AND FUNCTIONS,
10 SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION.

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

12 (1) FUNCTIONS OF HARFORD COUNTY AGENCIES THAT:

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

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

18 (III) ARE STATE FUNCTIONS DELEGATED TO THE AGENCIES
19 BY THE STATE; AND

20 (2) QUASI-STATE AGENCIES IN HARFORD COUNTY THAT WERE
21 CREATED BY STATE LAW INCLUDING:

22 (I) THE HARFORD COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE;

23 (II) THE HARFORD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS;

24 (III) THE HARFORD COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION;

25 (IV) THE HARFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
26 SERVICES; AND

27 (V) THE HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

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

4 **(1) WRITE AND PUBLISH EACH OFFICIAL DOCUMENT IN ENGLISH;**
5 **AND**

6 **(2) CONDUCT EACH MEETING AND OTHER OFFICIAL ORAL**
7 **COMMUNICATION THE AGENCIES AUTHORIZE IN ENGLISH.**

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

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

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

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

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

18 **(5) PROVIDE INTERPRETATION FOR DEAF INDIVIDUALS IN**
19 **AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE;**

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

21 **(7) PROMOTE THE ARTS, INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE, OR**
22 **TOURISM; OR**

23 **(8) ASSIST INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NOT PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH**
24 **IN THE CONDUCT OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS.**

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

27 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That if any provision of this
28 Act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid for any
29 reason in a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity does not affect other
30 provisions or any other application of this Act which can be given effect without the

1 invalid provision or application, and for this purpose the provisions of this Act are
2 declared severable.

3 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
4 October 1, 2010.