

SENATE BILL 370

F1
HB 651/21 – W&M

2lr0730
CF HB 37

By: **Senator King**

Introduced and read first time: January 21, 2022

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Educational Interpreter – Certification Requirements**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Board of Education and the Professional Standards
4 and Teacher Education Board to develop regulations for the certification of
5 educational interpreters on or before a certain date; providing that individuals who
6 are deaf or hard of hearing may not be denied the right to receive certain credentials
7 or a contract for work for which the individual is otherwise qualified and capable of
8 performing because the individual is deaf or hard of hearing; requiring an
9 educational interpreter employed by a public school to obtain a certification on or
10 before a certain date; requiring the State to explore fiscal support for educational
11 interpreters; and generally relating to the certification of educational interpreters.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article – Education
14 Section 6–704(a)
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

17 BY adding to
18 Article – Education
19 Section 6–704.2
20 Annotated Code of Maryland
21 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

22 Preamble

23 WHEREAS, As of September 2021, Maryland has 150 part–time and full–time
24 American Sign Language educational interpreters in the State; and

25 WHEREAS, There is no certification or licensing requirement for educational
26 interpreters in the State; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, Deaf students have the right to a fully accessible education, including
2 access to all information, specialized personnel, school programs, social activities, and
3 extracurricular activities available to hearing students; and

4 WHEREAS, Deaf students have the right to qualified professionals proficient in
5 developing each student's acquisition of language through early intervention and during
6 their school years and to assessment on a regular basis by qualified language acquisition
7 professionals; and

8 WHEREAS, Interpreting services for children who are deaf or hard of hearing
9 include oral transliteration services, cued language transliteration services, and sign
10 language interpreting services; and

11 WHEREAS, A student who communicates by using American Sign Language needs
12 an educational interpreter proficient in American Sign Language, a student who
13 communicates by using Signed Exact English needs an educational interpreter proficient
14 in Signed Exact English, and a student who relies on oral communication instead of signing
15 to communicate needs an oral interpreter; and

16 WHEREAS, The National Association of Interpreters in Education believes an
17 interpreter working in an educational setting possesses specialized academic and
18 professional credentials that include knowledge and skill sets for the educational
19 environment; and

20 WHEREAS, Interpreters must adhere to a high standard of ethical practices and
21 professional integrity, as well as pursue excellence through professional development
22 opportunities that continually enhance the quality of the services provided; now, therefore,

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

25 **Article – Education**

26 6–704.

27 (a) (1) In accordance with Title 10, Subtitle 1 of the State Government Article,
28 both the State Board and the Board shall develop for consideration rules and regulations
29 for:

30 (i) Except as provided in item (iii) of this paragraph, the
31 certification of teachers and other professional personnel in accordance with this article;

32 (ii) Requirements for preparation of teachers and other education
33 personnel; [and]

34 (iii) The certification of social workers employed by a local school

1 employer as professional personnel; AND

2 (IV) THE CERTIFICATION OF EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETERS, IN
3 ACCORDANCE WITH § 6-704.2 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

4 (2) Rules and regulations developed by the State Board shall be reviewed
5 by the Board.

6 (3) Rules and regulations developed by the Board shall be reviewed by the
7 State Board.

8 (4) Rules and regulations that are initiated by either the State Board or
9 the Board and submitted for review to each other shall be acted upon within 60 days of
10 their receipt by the other party.

11 (5) Recommendations on rules and regulations shall be implemented if
12 both the Board and the State Board approve them.

13 (6) An individual who is otherwise qualified may not be denied the right to
14 receive credentials from the Board, to receive training to become a teacher, or to practice
15 teaching in any school because that individual is totally or partially blind, **DEAF, OR HARD**
16 **OF HEARING.**

17 (7) A county board may not refuse to contract with or engage a teacher
18 because of blindness **OR DEAFNESS** if the blind, **DEAF, OR HARD OF HEARING** teacher is
19 capable of performing the duties of the position for which [he] **THE TEACHER** has applied.

20 (8) The right of a school psychologist, who is certified by the Board to
21 practice school psychology consistent with the provisions of that certification, may not be
22 limited by Title 18 of the Health Occupations Article with respect to the practice of school
23 psychology in an educational institution.

24 **6-704.2.**

25 (A) IN THIS SECTION, "EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETER" MEANS AN
26 INDIVIDUAL WHO PROVIDES SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING SERVICES IN AN
27 EDUCATIONAL SETTING.

28 (B) (1) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2023, THE STATE BOARD AND THE BOARD
29 SHALL DEVELOP REGULATIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF EDUCATIONAL
30 INTERPRETERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

31 (2) IN ADOPTING THE REGULATIONS REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH
32 (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE STATE BOARD AND THE BOARD SHALL CONSIDER
33 INCLUDING A FULL OR PARTIAL REIMBURSEMENT OF EXAMINATION COSTS FOR

1 CANDIDATES WHO SUCCESSFULLY OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE AS AN EDUCATIONAL
2 INTERPRETER.

3 (C) AN EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETER EMPLOYED BY A PUBLIC SCHOOL
4 SHALL OBTAIN CERTIFICATION ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2029.

5 (D) THE STATE SHALL EXPLORE FISCAL SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL
6 INTERPRETERS.

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
8 1, 2022.