

House Bill 535 - Maryland Sign Language Interpreters Act
sponsored by Delegate Acevero

Madam Chairperson and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee:

My name is Rebecca Greenwald. I am Deaf and live in Maryland. I am writing this testimony to ask you to support **HB535 - Maryland Sign Language Interpreter Act of 2021** sponsored by Delegate Acevero.

This bill would require licensure for sign language interpreters working in the state of Maryland and help to ensure that members of the Deaf community have access to qualified interpreters. When unqualified interpreters are allowed to work unchecked, the impact on the communities they serve can be a matter of life or death. This bill provides both a mechanism for licensing interpreters and a means for relief in the form of a grievance process.

I have lots to say about my experiences with ASL interpreters in Maryland, but here's an example. When I had my first child birth at AAMC, there were too many unqualified interpreters, often changing every hour during my hospital stay. I was not very comfortable with the different interpreters in one day and had no privacy. Here, I am asking you to support the bill. It's time for qualified interpreters to obtain licensure in the state of Maryland.

As a constituent, I ask you to please support HB535.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Greenwald Annapolis, MD 21401