

**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 Dr. Risa Shariff. I am a hearing interpreter, living and working 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.

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

Sincerely,

Dr. Risa Shariff  
Hyattsville, MD 20783