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Patrick Moran - President

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**Testimony**  
**SB 129 – Access to Counsel In Immigration Proceedings Program –**  
**Judicial Proceedings**  
**February 3, 2022**  
**FAVORABLE**

AFSCME Council 3 supports SB 129. This legislation establishes a program to provide legal representation and direct services and resources to individuals who are dealing with immigration proceedings and who otherwise could not afford it. SB 129 establishes a fund administered by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) to help individuals cover the costs of their immigration proceedings. This legislation also directs the MLSC to conduct important outreach and education to impacted families and communities.

As the union that represents state employees who work for various state agencies dedicated to providing Maryland's social safety net, SB 129 very much falls in line with our ideals that all Marylanders deserve fairness and opportunity. Our members at the Maryland Office of the Public Defender know the challenges that indigent clients can face in our legal system without the proper resources. Our members in the Departments of Health and Human Services know the impact that the right aid and services can have in helping someone in their time most desperate times of need. This important legislation ensures that as a state we're giving all of our neighbors a fair chance at legal representation and the support and services they need.

AFSCME Council 3 is proud to stand with Maryland's immigrant community on this legislation. SB 129 is a good bill, and we urge the committee to provide a favorable recommendation. Thank you.

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An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.  
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