

MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

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TESTIMONY

BILL: House Bill (HB) 37 - Education – Educational Interpreter – Certification Requirements

SPONSOR: Delegate Qi, *Montgomery County (15)*

POSITION: **FAVORABLE**

Monday, January 17, 2022

HB 37: Favorable

The Maryland Student Coalition is an entirely student-led, advocacy group that serves to bring students together to promote education policy reform. Founded in 2020 as a vehicle for advocating for students' right to demonstrate, our scope has since expanded to include more educational advocacy initiatives. You can learn more at marylandstudents.org

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Washington, and honorable members of the Ways and Means Committee. We are writing in favor of House Bill 37.

House Bill (HB) 37 - Education – Educational Interpreter – Certification Requirements, which requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop and implement regulations for the certification of educational interpreters. Additionally, this legislation ensures that deaf and hard-of-hearing persons can not be denied this certification (assuming they are otherwise capable and qualified).

The Maryland Student Coalition strongly supports providing qualified language interpreters for deaf students. According to the Preamble of HB 37, as of September 2021, Maryland has roughly 150 ASL educational interpreters, however, there is currently no certification or licensing requirement. In order to provide all students will a quality education, supporting students that are deaf or hard-of-hearing is essential. Implementing a standard of certification will provide this quality of education for all students.

The Maryland Student Coalition supports the principles within the legislation and strongly encourages issuing a **favorable** report on HB37.