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TO: **Chair** Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary
Vice Chair Delegate Alonzo T. Washington
Ways and Means Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)
DATE: 02/02/2022
RE: HB0252 Return Preparation Assistance Program for Low–Income Families

The MLLC supports HB0252 Return Preparation Assistance Program for Low–Income Families

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0252, Return Preparation Assistance Program for Low–Income Families.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is considered to be America’s largest and most successful anti-poverty program. In 2017, EITC helped lift about 5.7 million people – including about 3 million children – out of poverty. It also helps advance racial equity in the tax code. The EITC is particularly impactful for women of color. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, an estimated 21% of Latina women benefit from the EITC, more than double the rate for white women (9%).

This bill establishes an Income Tax Return Preparation Assistance Program for Low-Income families that requires the Comptroller, for certain taxable years, to prepare certain income tax returns and amended income tax returns for those eligible taxpayers. The Comptroller’s office would prepare and send the residents their pre-filed amended returns for them to review, sign, and return. This would ensure that those residents would then receive their EITC refunds. This also prohibits a tax collector from assessing a certain penalty under certain circumstances relating to the assistance program for low-income families.

For these reasons, the MLLC respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0252. Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for HB0252, Return Preparation Assistance Program for Low–Income Families.