



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0389**  
**Public Schools - Dual Language Education - Teacher Certification, Program Implementation, and Study**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Lewis Young

**Committee:** Education, Energy, and the Environment

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0389 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state with well over 30,000 members.

The United States is one of the very few countries that does not encourage bilingualism. In most countries, residents have at least two languages, and sometimes multiple languages. Given how diverse this country is, it would make sense to have bilingual programs and encourage teachers to be bilingual.

This bill would require the Department of Education to develop guidelines for the implementation of dual language immersion programs in public schools that are based on and aligned with the guiding principles for dual language education. We should have done this decades ago, but just getting this kind of program started is a giant step forward in catching up with the rest of the world, and also just being able to talk with our neighbors.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.