Calvert LIBRARY
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Carrie Willson, Executive Director • carrie.willson@calvertlibrary.info
850 Costley Way • Prince Frederick, MD 20678 • 410-535-0291 • 301-855-1862

BILL:	**HB678 – Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library- Funding and Budget Submission**	**DATE:**	February 25, 2025
SUBJECT:	Funding	**COMMITTEE:**	House Appropriations
TESTIMONY FROM:	Carrie Willson, Executive Director, Calvert Library	**POSITION:**	**Support**

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the citizens of Calvert County, I respectfully request support of **House Bill 678 Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library- Funding and Budget Submission.** Begun via legislation in FY15, Maryland's State Library Agency has been tasked with coordinating the Deaf Culture Digital Library. The mandate includes a coordinator, the establishment of a Friends organization and an Advisory Board, the creation of a web site and the delivery of staff training and purchasing and providing resources to the deaf and hard of hearing community in Maryland.

The MD State Library Agency (MSLA) has faithfully upheld the letter and spirit of the law and has significantly grown its public programs including American Sign Language instruction, technology and accessibility, author talks and a virtual Summer Reading program. MSLA has allocated $235,000 in general funds to support DCDL since FY15.

The DCDL web site serves more and more residents as a digital library resource center and demand for materials and services is also projected to continue to grow. I respectfully request that, even in this challenging budget year, the State Library Agency be granted funds to ensure that these valuable resources, serving Maryland's deaf and hard of hearing community, be allocated the funding they need to thrive.

Sincerely,

Carrie Willson
Executive Director, Calvert Library