

MLU Support Letter - SB490.pdf

Uploaded by: Carlos Orbe, Jr.

Position: FAV

February 18, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Support for Senate Bill 490 – State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups – Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements

Dear Chair Feldman and Esteemed Committee Members,

At Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU), we are dedicated to promoting inclusivity, equity, and representation for all communities across our state. Senate Bill 490, which seeks to eliminate citizenship requirements for certain boards and commissions and mandates that these entities reflect the full diversity of Maryland, is a significant step toward ensuring that all residents have a voice in the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

By removing outdated citizenship requirements, SB 490 acknowledges the valuable contributions of non-citizen residents who actively participate in and enrich our communities. This inclusive approach not only broadens the pool of qualified candidates for these important roles but also ensures that diverse perspectives are represented, leading to more comprehensive and effective governance. Many individuals who are integral to the social and economic fabric of Maryland are currently excluded from serving on boards and commissions due to citizenship restrictions. SB 490 rectifies this inequity, empowering these community members to contribute their unique insights and experiences to the state's policymaking and advisory bodies.

The enactment of SB 490 will create expanded opportunities for Latino and immigrant communities in several key areas. In education, the inclusion of diverse voices can lead to the development of policies that are more responsive to the needs of all students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds. In workforce development, allowing non-citizen professionals to serve will enable boards and commissions to benefit from a wider range of expertise, fostering innovation and economic growth. This legislation actively reduces systemic barriers, promoting a more equitable environment where all residents, regardless of citizenship status, can participate in shaping the future of Maryland.

MLU is committed to amplifying the impact of SB 490 through our ongoing efforts. By collaborating with local organizations, we will work to identify and support qualified individuals from diverse backgrounds for appointments to boards and commissions. Through outreach and advocacy, we will educate our communities about the opportunities available through this legislation and encourage active participation in public service roles. Additionally, we will provide training and resources to prepare community members for effective service on various boards and commissions, ensuring that they are well-equipped to contribute meaningfully.

We urge the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 490. Together, we can build a more inclusive and representative Maryland, where every resident has the opportunity to contribute to our collective success.

Sincerely,

Carlos Orbe, Jr.
Communications and Public Affairs Specialist
Maryland Latinos Unidos
corbejr@mdlatinosunidos.org

SB0490_State_Boards_Commissions_Elimination_of_Cit

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR SB0490

State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups – Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements

Bill Sponsor: Senator Kagan

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 SB0490 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

We are supposed to have a representative democracy and yet, we don't allow everyone to participate. The bodies that we rely on for advice and recommendations for legislative and other actions that affect everyone in the state too often are staffed entirely by white men – even those bodies that make recommendations that affect women.

This bill is not only welcome, it is long past due. It eliminates the citizenship requirement for all state boards, commissions, Committees, Task Forces, and Workgroups. This will allow for all residents to have a voice. Additionally, it requires, as much as practical, for all these bodies to reflect the full diversity of the state. This can only make things better for everyone. We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

SB 490 final testimony Feb 20 2025 mga pdf.pdf

Uploaded by: Christina Peusch

Position: FAV

Maryland State Child Care Association

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Annapolis, Md. 21403
Phone: (410) 820-9196
Email: info@mscca.org
www.mscca.org

Caring For Maryland's Most Important Natural Resource™

The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) is a non-profit, statewide, professional association incorporated in 1984 to promote the growth and development of child care and learning centers in Maryland. MSCCA has over 5500 members working in the field of child care/early childhood education. We believe children are our most important natural resource and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.

Testimony: SB 490: State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups- Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements

Submitted to: Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

Feb 20, 2025

Maryland State Child Care Association supports SB 490.

SB 490 is asking for equity and diversity in composition of Boards and Commissions membership, which is reflective of priorities and challenges, as well as inclusive of diverse practitioners, specifically residents and individuals of the state and community.

Boards and Commissions work behind the scenes to meet their charge and often play an essential role in state governance. Maryland is a very diverse state, and we must recognize and embrace this fact. Members of Boards, whether appointed, elected, or volunteers, should reflect not only geographic diversity of their state, but represent diversity comprehensively in its many forms.

Semantics matters, consistent language matters, diversity, inclusiveness and representation matters. Our society has become divided over certain words that we used to be proud to say. Now is the time to act to ensure our very diverse residents and individuals are represented on Boards and Commissions without compromising any requirements germane or relevant to each Board or Commission, only to refine by:

- Expanding membership criteria to reflect the “full diversity of the State;”
- Replace the word “citizen” with “resident” or “private individual”, and
- Establish consistency throughout the code.

Board composition is at the heart of board effectiveness. Progressive boards should continuously consider whether they have the optimum composition. Effective boards are comprised of members who reflect the priorities and challenges of the business, the relevant areas of risk, and the diversity of stakeholders.

MSCCA urges a favorable report for SB 490.

SB 490 Various Statutes Regarding Resident Members

Uploaded by: Heron Bondoc

Position: FAV



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE ASIAN AMERICAN
AND PACIFIC ISLANDER CAUCUS
MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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CHAIR, OUTREACH COMMITTEE

DELEGATE SARAH WOLEK

**Chairman Feldman, Vice chair Kagan and distinguished members of the
committee**

**SB 490: Various Statutes Regarding Resident Membership Requirements for
State Boards and Committees**

The AAPI Caucus supports SB 490, which expands opportunities for residents, regardless of citizenship status, to participate in state boards and commissions. Many non-citizen residents contribute significantly to our communities, particularly in areas such as public health, education, and business. These individuals often bring valuable expertise and perspectives that can help shape more effective policies and programs. This bill acknowledges their expertise and lived experiences, allowing them to serve in advisory and decision-making capacities that impact all Maryland residents. By

ensuring diverse representation on state boards, this legislation strengthens Maryland's democratic processes and builds trust between government agencies and immigrant communities. Additionally, as AAPI communities include many first-generation immigrants, SB 490 ensures that they, too, can have a seat at the table in shaping policies that directly affect them. Representation matters, and this bill is a step toward making Maryland's governance more inclusive and reflective of its diverse population.

Sincerely,

Harry Bhandari

Chair, Maryland Asian American Pacific Islander Caucus

SB0490_Elimination of Citizenship Requirements_FAV

Uploaded by: Liz Enagonio

Position: FAV



Indivisible: Central Maryland

Susan Radke, Lead Advocate

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TESTIMONY FOR SB0490

State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements

Bill Sponsors: Senators Kagan, Benson, Brooks, Ellis, Feldman, Guzzone, Hayes, Hester, Hettelman, King, Lam, McCray, Muse, Rosapepe, Sydnor and M. Washington

Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Indivisible Central Maryland

Person Submitting: Liz Enagonio and Susan Radke, lead advocates

Position: FAVORABLE

Our names are Liz Enagonio and Susan Radke, lead advocates for Indivisible Central Maryland, a grassroots organization of constituents dedicated to protecting progressive and democratic values. Indivisible Central Maryland **strongly supports SB0490, State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements** We ask you to VOTE FAVORABLY for SB0490.

SB0490 would eliminate **citizenship** requirements for numerous boards and commissions, instead permitting **residents** of Maryland to fill these positions. The bill also requires that members of boards, committees, commissions, task forces, and workgroups reflect the full diversity of the State to the extent practicable. This is a positive and proactive way to provide equal chances for persons in Maryland who are qualified for these positions/jobs, and would help protect our diverse Maryland communities from the anti-equality and unjust attempts by the current federal administration to actively prevent and impede immigrants and people of color from a range of better-paying employment opportunities. As Marylanders, we stand strong for ALL of our residents who can and want to contribute their expertise and skills to keep our state a vital and successful place to live and work. Your FAVORABLE vote on SB0490 will help strengthen Maryland's commitment to support all who live here, and would allow a variety of qualified residents to seek these positions and improve their communities and the state.

Respectfully,

Liz Enagonio
Susan Radke

lead advocates, Indivisible Central Maryland
members, Maryland Legislative Coalition

SB490 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Madelin Martinez

Position: FAV

SB490**State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements**

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 20, 2025

SUPPORT

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports SB490, which removes U.S. citizenship requirements for serving on state boards, committees, commissions, task forces, and workgroups while requiring these bodies to reflect Maryland's full diversity to the extent practicable. This bill would allow legal permanent residents and other qualified Maryland residents to serve their communities through these important public service roles.

For a century, Catholic Charities has provided care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. We accompany Marylanders as they age with dignity, support their pursuit of employment and career advancement, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve independence, prepare for educational success, and welcome immigrant neighbors into Maryland communities.

As the largest private provider of human services in the state, Catholic Charities of Baltimore carries out its mission through six core pillars, one of which is "Welcoming New Neighbors." Through our Esperanza Center, which has served as a vital resource for immigrants since 1963, we provide essential services in education, healthcare, immigration legal matters, family reunification, and general community support to help immigrants from all over the world navigate life in a new country. Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers works closely with thousands of immigrants each year, giving us firsthand insight into both the challenges they face and the valuable contributions they make to our communities. Many of these individuals possess significant professional expertise in healthcare, education, engineering, and other fields that could greatly benefit our state boards and commissions.

Maryland's boards and commissions make critical decisions affecting all state residents, including our immigrant communities. By removing citizenship requirements while mandating consideration of the state's diversity, this legislation will ensure these bodies better reflect and represent the communities they serve. This inclusive approach aligns with both democratic principles and Catholic social teaching on human dignity and participation. It also reflects our organizational experience that communities are strongest when all members can fully participate in civic life and public service.

For these reasons, Catholic Charities of Baltimore urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB490.

Submitted By: Madelin Martinez, Assistant Director of Advocacy

SB490_ State Boards, Committee, Commissions, Task

Uploaded by: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

Position: FAV



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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JASON A. AVILA GARCIA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TO: Senator Brain J. Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: February 20, 2025
RE: SB490 – State Boards, Committee, Commissions, Tasks
Forces, and Workgroups – Elimination of Citizenship
Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements

The MLLC supports SB490 – State Boards, Committee, Commissions, Tasks Forces, and Workgroups – Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements.

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 SB490.

SB490 eliminates citizenship requirements for certain boards and commissions, requiring that members of certain boards, committees, commissions, task forces, and workgroups reflect the full diversity of the State to the extent practicable.

This bill ensures that residents of the State of Maryland, who work, pay taxes and are impacted by any decisions affecting Maryland residents, are included in the actions leading to these decisions, regardless of their citizenship status. Because of their contributions to our society, as tax-paying, law-abiding residents of Maryland, their valuable input should be taken into consideration. Additionally, this bill will also help to assure diversity efforts are successfully established for state boards, committees, commissions, task forces and workgroups.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on SB490.

Testimony in support of SB0490 - State Organizatio

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

02/20/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0490- POSITION: FAVORABLE

State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements

TO: Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#/0490, **State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements**

There is an ongoing effort to suppress and eliminate DEI by persons who see it as a threat to white Christian male domination of our workplaces and our society. There is also ongoing demonization of immigrants whether they are or are not documented.

Among seven DEI experts and industry leaders CNN has interviewed, most had a shared vision for what constitutes the concept: ¹

- **Diversity** is embracing the differences everyone brings to the table, whether those are someone's race, age, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability or other aspects of social identity.
- **Equity** is treating everyone fairly and providing equal opportunities.
- **Inclusion** is respecting everyone's voice and creating a culture in which people from all backgrounds feel encouraged to express their ideas and perspectives.

DEI was created because marginalized communities have not always had equal opportunities for jobs or felt a sense of belonging in majority-White corporate settings, said Daniel Oppong, founder of The Courage Collective, a consultancy that advises companies on DEI.

"That is the genesis of why some of these programs exist," he said. **"It was an attempt to try to create workplaces where more or all people can thrive."**

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2025/01/22/us/dei-diversity-equity-inclusion-explained/index.html>

It now seems that DEI is a ethnocentric way of declaring that ONLY white Christian men are the top in all areas. It believes that any race or gender or nationality or immigration status is by definition “less than” because there is no way, even if they are qualified, that the qualification overcomes the white privilege being claimed. It also believes that all immigrants are automatically less than and should, despite any contributions they are making in their life in the United States, not have any role or say-so in any area that affects their life and community.

This bill makes the moral and ethical statement that my Jewish faith, in fact all Abrahamic faiths believe, that you do not do anything to others that are hateful to yourself. It centers the “love your neighbor as yourself” moral imperative as a governing philosophy to be applied to the mechanisms of government.

This bill will remind all of us that the commandments to care for the stranger are mentioned more times than *any* other commandment in the Torah — more even than the command to love God (*v'ahavta*). According to the Talmud, Rabbi Eliezer the Great noted that "the Torah warns 36 times, and some say 46 times, not to oppress the stranger" (Babylonian Talmud, *Bava M'tzia* 59b). The decree is articulated in a number of ways: "You shall not wrong nor oppress the stranger, for you were strangers in the Land of Egypt" (Exodus 22:20). "The strangers who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens... for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 19:34).²

In recognition of and respect for those strangers amongst us this bill will eliminate citizenship requirements for boards and commissions. It will make the moral and ethical policy effective for Maryland by requiring that members of boards, committees, commissions, task forces, and workgroups reflect the full diversity of the State to the extent practicable.

DEI does NOT mean you let anyone you see as less than you continue to be treated less, it says you center promotion of diversity, equity and inclusion in how you permit volunteers and staff to reflect and include the people living our communities.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#/0490.

² [https://reformjudaism.org/learning/torah-study/torah-commentary/commandment-love-and-help-stranger#:~:text=The%20decree%20is%20articulated%20in,%22%20\(Leviticus%2019%3A34\)](https://reformjudaism.org/learning/torah-study/torah-commentary/commandment-love-and-help-stranger#:~:text=The%20decree%20is%20articulated%20in,%22%20(Leviticus%2019%3A34))

2025 ACNM SB 490 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

Bill Number: Senate Bill 490 - State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements

Hearing Date: February 20, 2025

Position: Support

The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) supports *Senate Bill Senate Bill 490 - State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements*. The bill provides basic updates to Maryland's law on boards and other stakeholder bodies:

- Aligns membership requirements for the Board of Nursing with nearly all other health occupations and professional licensure boards. By removing the citizenship requirement, the bill will expand the number of experienced and qualified pool of applicants to serve on the Board. Many nurses from other countries have lived and worked in Maryland for a long-time. Their experience could add a valuable perspective to the Board; and
- Provides that appointments to boards, commissions, and stakeholder groups should be as diverse to the extent practicable. This provision reflects best practices in making appointments, as stakeholder groups should be reflective of their communities.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

Kagan - Testimony - Diversifying Boards & Commissi

Uploaded by: Sen. Cheryl Kagan

Position: FAV

CHERYL C. KAGAN
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and
the Environment Committee

Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee

Joint Committee on Federal Relations



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Cheryl.Kagan@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB490: Diversifying Boards & Commissions

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Thursday, February 20, 2025 1:00 PM

Maryland has more than [650 Boards and Commissions](#) that engage more than 6,000 volunteers. Appointed by the Governor, they play a vital but often unseen role in regulating industries, shaping policies, and overseeing public institutions. These span nearly every profession and interest area, and each has its own set of bylaws.

While some statutes mandate that “members should reflect the *geographic* diversity of the State,” most do not reference *any other* form of diversity. Rather than setting unrealistic standards, [SB490](#) only requires that “to the extent practicable,” Boards and Commissions “reflect the full diversity of the State.”

Additionally, more than 15% of Marylanders are foreign-born; almost half are not yet citizens, according to a [2024 report](#) from our Comptroller. A careful review revealed that 42 Boards needlessly limit potential appointees to “citizens.” Maryland should open eligibility to any resident with expertise and a passion for service.

In summary, SB490 would expand membership criteria to reflect the full diversity of the State “to the extent practicable.” It also updates language, replacing “citizen” with “resident” or “private individual.” Given the significant role these groups play, their membership should better embody the composition of our State.

I urge a favorable report on SB490.

SB 490

Uploaded by: Women Legislators of Maryland

Position: FAV

DEL. DANA JONES, DISTRICT 30A
President

DEL. MICHELE GUYTON, DISTRICT 42B
1st Vice-President

DEL. JENNIFER WHITE HOLLAND, DISTRICT 10
2nd Vice-President

DEL. SARAH WOLEK, DISTRICT 16
Secretary



DEL. LINDA FOLEY, DISTRICT 15
Treasurer

DEL. KAREN R. TOLES, DISTRICT 25
Parliamentarian

DEL. JACQUELINE T. ADDISON, DISTRICT 45
At Large

DEL. KYM TAYLOR, DISTRICT 23
At Large

WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February 19, 2025

To: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

The Maryland Women's Caucus is proud to express our unanimous support for SB0490: State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements. This critical legislation takes an essential step toward ensuring that Maryland's boards and commissions reflect the full diversity of the communities they serve by removing outdated citizenship requirements and fostering greater inclusivity in decision-making spaces.

As you are aware, women—particularly immigrant women—play a vital role in Maryland's economy, education system, and social fabric. However, many are often excluded from leadership and policy-shaping opportunities due to unnecessary barriers like citizenship requirements. SB0490 ensures that all qualified individuals, regardless of their citizenship status, have the opportunity to contribute their expertise and lived experiences to state boards and commissions. By requiring these bodies to reflect Maryland's full diversity, this bill strengthens representation for women, children, and historically marginalized communities whose voices are often overlooked in policy decisions that directly impact them.

Diversity in leadership leads to better policies, particularly in areas such as education, health care, and economic development—issues that disproportionately affect women and families. When decision-making bodies include representatives who understand the unique challenges faced by immigrant women, mothers, and caregivers, they can craft more equitable and effective policies that support all Marylanders.

For these reasons, the Maryland Women's Caucus strongly urges support for SB0490. By passing this legislation, Maryland will take a meaningful step toward creating a more inclusive, representative, and equitable government that truly reflects the strength and diversity of our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your commitment to improving the lives of Marylanders.

2025-02-20-SB0490-State Bds Comms-Citizenship & Di

Uploaded by: Spencer Dove

Position: FWA



State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights

Respect...Integrity...Effective Communication

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Wes Moore

Lt. Governor
Aruna Miller

Commission Chair
Stephanie Suerth, MPA,
CCEP

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MSc
Jeff Rosen
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**Education and
Outreach Director**
Candice Gray

Senate Bill 490 – State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups – Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements Position: Support with Amendment

Dear Chairperson Feldman, Vice Chairperson Kagan, and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (“MCCR”; “The Commission”) is the State agency responsible for enforcing Maryland’s laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, state contracts, commercial leasing, and health services based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, physical and mental disability, source of income, and military status.

Senate Bill 490 deletes references within Maryland law requiring individuals serving on the many public bodies in service to our State to be citizens of the United States, replacing them with existing references to be private individuals and/or residents. SB490 also requires that, to the extent practicable, the membership of any public body created by State law shall reflect the full diversity of the State.

MCCR supports SB490 because we believe that statutory provisions requiring citizenship to serve on public bodies are both onerous and outdated. As an agency governed by a nine-member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the State Senate, MCCR knows first-hand the value of having private individuals representing all different walks of life across Maryland involved in agency policymaking and initiatives. To prevent a qualified individual from bringing their expertise, background, and life story to our Commission simply because they do not have citizenship, we believe, would be a disservice to Marylanders. The only exception to this that MCCR can support is in instances where federal or other applicable law requires citizenship as a condition to membership on these public bodies. MCCR encourages the General Assembly to examine all affected public bodies to make sure that removal of citizenship does not present a conflict.

For these reasons, the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights urges a favorable with amendment vote on SB490. Thank you for your time and consideration of the information contained in this letter. MCCR looks forward to the continued opportunity to work with you to promote and improve fair housing and civil rights in Maryland.

“Our vision is to have a State that is free from any trace of unlawful discrimination.”

William Donald Schaefer Tower, 6 Saint Paul Street, Suite 900, Baltimore, Maryland 21202-1631
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Written Testimony for SB 490_HB 696_ State Boards

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: UNF

Written Testimony for **SB 490/HB 696**: State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups - Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements - Please **VOTE NO** on this bill.

Dear Education, Energy & the Environment Committee and Health and Government Operations Committee:

This bill's synopsis reads "...Eliminating citizenship requirements for boards and commissions; and requiring that members of boards, committees, commissions, task forces, and workgroups reflect the full diversity of the State to the extent practicable..."

This bill will do nothing but hurt the **citizens** of Maryland and any other **citizens** of the United States that decide to move to Maryland. This bill endangers all of us in the state of Maryland instead of keeping us safe from **illegal immigrant criminals** that have come into our country en masse since January 20, 2021. Since that date, millions of **drug traffickers, murderers, rapists and human and sex traffickers** have entered our country illegally, without the review process that had been in effect for decades before that. We cannot risk letting any of these **criminals** be appointed to any of our State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups!! This bill **eliminates** the stipulation of being "**a citizen**" in order to serve on any of these entities. This will encourage **drug traffickers, murderers, rapists and human and sex traffickers** to push their criminal behaviors and acts onto our society, especially in the following departments:

"Correctional Services", which will now include a "...'**RESIDENTS**' advisory committee' for the State correctional facilities located in or planned for location in each of the following areas: (1) Baltimore City; (2) Cumberland; (3) Hagerstown; (4) Jessup; and (5) Somerset County. This could lead to illegal immigrant criminals now having input into how our State correctional facilities are run and who will get parole or be released, i.e. their criminal acquaintances. It also brings the possibility of violence toward rival inmates.

"Economic Development", which includes a **"Maryland Military Installation Council"**, which could potentially give an **"illegal immigrant criminal"** an opportunity to control, influence, or impact our military in some way. The bill

specifically mentions the following military Alliances: “the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance”, “the Army Alliance”, “the Military Alliance Council of Charles County”, “the Maritime Technology Alliance”, “the **Fort Detrick** Alliance”, the **Fort Meade** Alliance, and “the Andrews Business and Community Alliance”. We absolutely cannot risk the safety of our country by appointing “**illegal immigrant criminals**” to any positions whatsoever in these Alliances! There should never be “**illegal immigrant criminals**” anywhere near any military installation! This is unacceptable!

“**Family Law**”, which includes a “local [citizen] RESIDENT board of review for children in out-of-home care” and a State [Citizens] RESIDENTS **Review Board for Children**”, which may “make recommendations to the Secretary of Human Services and the General Assembly regarding: (i) the response of the State to child abuse and neglect; and (ii) out-of-home care policies, procedures, and practices”. This would put “**illegal immigrant criminals**” contributing to the “policies, procedures, and practices” that have to do with our children! This would put our children in their reach. Again, this is unacceptable!

“**Public Safety**”, which includes the “**Sexual Offender Advisory Board**”. Again, we are putting our children in harm’s way and within the reach of “**illegal immigrant criminals**”. It’s basically like asking the fox to watch the henhouse. This is beyond unacceptable!

“**Maryland Aviation Commission**”, which could risk the lives of our citizens when they use air travel in their everyday lives.

I’m not against “State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups” having members that are from a variety of backgrounds. I think this is essential. However, we need to honor and safeguard our Maryland and United States **citizens** at the same time. Therefore, we must have people that are **citizens** who have an allegiance to the United States and Maryland working in these groups!!

I have a friend that I met in college who is from another country. He immigrated to the United States legally years ago. He has told me that one thing that bothers him immensely is to see people from other nations illegally entering our country. His very strongly held belief is that if he can legally immigrate to this country, then everyone else from other nations can do the same. He and I share that strongly held belief. Neither of us are saying we don’t want a nation or state that is rich in people from different backgrounds. We are simply saying that we want those people to come to our wonderful country **legally**.

For these reasons, please **VOTE NO** on this bill. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals

A Very Concerned Mother of 3 and Maryland Resident