

## **SB435 - Institutions of Higher Education and Elem**

Uploaded by: Abigail Snyder

Position: FAV

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Jewish Federation of Howard County  
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Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary  
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Jews For Judaism  
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Hebrew Congregation  
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Temple Isaiah  
Zionist Organization of America  
Baltimore District

**Written Testimony**

**Senate Bill 435 - Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary  
and Secondary Schools - Title VI Coordinators  
Appropriations Committee – March 5, 2025  
Support**

**Background: Senate Bill 435** would require the governing board of each institution of higher education in the State and local school systems to designate a Title VI Coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and authorize a person alleging discrimination under certain provisions of law to file a complaint with a Title VI Coordinator of a local school system, as applicable.

**Written Comments:** It's impossible to turn a blind eye to the increased hateful rhetoric that is plaguing our school systems across the State. Just last week there was an incident at Towson High School where a swastika was drawn in one of the bathrooms. These incidents are not insular to the K-12 education system, in fact, they increase tremendously in our institutions of higher education, especially since the horrific massacre of October 7<sup>th</sup>. Between encampments and protests, it's difficult for some students to feel welcome and safe.

It is important that all our college students feel like they belong on campus. By requiring that each school designate a Title VI Coordinator, we are ensuring that there is a resource available to students who feel they are being discriminated against, and proper avenues for incidents to be reported. By ensuring there is access to these resources, we are further protecting our students and allowing them to focus on the reason that they are on campus in the first place – to receive an excellent education.

**For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Councils asks for a favorable report on SB435.**

*The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.*

BALTIMORE JEWISH COUNCIL

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Member of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Baltimore Jewish Council is an agency of The Associated

 **The Associated**  
Jewish Federation of Baltimore

# **SB0435\_Title\_VI\_Coordinator\_MLC\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



## **TESTIMONY FOR SB0435**

### **Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary Schools – Title VI Coordinators**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Waldstreicher

**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 SB0435 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.

Education represents the barrier between the prospect of a good job and a comfortable future vs a life struggle to achieve financial stability. It is the one thing that we should ensure that everyone has equal access. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act was created to ensure and enforce equal access and the right to a good education.

At this time, we have a federal government that has made it abundantly clear that they do not support equal rights. It now is up to the state to do the right thing and support everyone's right to a good education, not only in elementary school, but also in all institutions of higher learning.

This bill, if enacted, would require each school to designate a person who would act as the Title VI Coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI, to document and investigate complaints, and to promote equal access and participation in the programs and activities of the school system. This person would help ensure that all of our children truly have equal access and the right to a good education.

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

# **SB 435 JCRC FINAL Institutions of Higher Education**

Uploaded by: deborah miller

Position: FAV



**Testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 435 – *Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools – Title VI Coordinators (Remove Discrimination in Education Act)***  
**Education, Energy, and the Environment**  
**March 5, 2025**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish social service agencies, synagogues, and schools throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on mutual respect, justice, equity and safety. We work throughout the region to advocate for our nonprofits that serve the most vulnerable on a non-sectarian basis and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the Jewish community and all Marylanders.

The JCRC supports Senate Bill 435, Remove Discrimination in Education Act. This Bill requires all higher education and local schools to appoint a Title VI Coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prevent discrimination based on race, color or national origin. This Coordinator would be responsible for overseeing equal access to programming on campus, documenting and investigating complaints, and providing training and resources about Title VI law and regulations.

The need for this bill could not be more urgent given the unprecedented and unacceptable rise of antisemitism in the US, especially targeting Jewish students. According to the ADL, Maryland ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation for the highest number of antisemitic incidents. And since Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>, there has been a 300% increase in antisemitic incidents, with violent protests on many campuses. A very recent AJC study showed that more than a third of American Jewish college students reported experiencing antisemitism at least once during their time on campus. Free speech must always be protected, but students should never be harassed, threatened or bullied because of their Jewish identity.

At the JCRC, our top priority is combating antisemitism and protecting the safety and security of the Jewish people, including Jewish students whether at our local schools or college campuses. In Montgomery County, our agency took the lead in addressing antisemitism at Montgomery County Community College (MCCC). We worked closely with the college president and administration to call out professors who were spewing hateful rhetoric. Since then, we have led trainings on antisemitism and beefed up Jewish and interfaith programming. The JCRC also has been on the frontlines confronting the spike in antisemitism at Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). We have trained thousands of educators in MCPS on Jewish identity and

antisemitism and been a critical resource for schools with significant numbers of Jewish students and faculty.

Senate Bill 435 would have been a huge asset to both MCPS and MCCC had it been in place last fall. No one should be targeted because of who they are or what they believe in, especially in the classroom or on campus. With a dedicated Title VI Coordinator, schools can stay in compliance with the law and reinforce the fundamental right to an education free from bias, hate and intimidation. The bill strengthens protections, ensures accountability and fosters a safer, more inclusive learning environment for all students. For these reasons, we support Senate Bill 435 and ask for a favorable report.

# **Einav Tsach Testimony - Senate Bill 435.pdf**

Uploaded by: Einav Tsach

Position: FAV



## **Einav Tsach**

etsach@terpmail.umd.edu  
University of Maryland, College Park  
3/2/2025

### **Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

Chair Senator Brian J. Feldman  
Vice Chair Senator Cheryl C. Kagan  
Members of the Committee

### **Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 435 – Remove Discrimination in Education Act**

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Einav Tsach and I'm a proud Terp at the University of Maryland, College Park. I'm honored to be testifying in strong support of Senate Bill 435.

I write to you as an Israeli immigrant to the United States, a grandson of Holocaust survivors, representing my nearly 6,000-strong Jewish and Israeli campus community - a community that continues to grapple with the explosion of campus antisemitism on Oct. 7, 2023.

Here are some examples:

Last school year, someone chalked the phrase "Holocaust 2.0" on the ground of a main plaza on campus – on the anniversary of the Kristallnacht pogrom. A few weeks ago, the words "Smash Zionism" were chalked on that same plaza (it was International Holocaust Remembrance Day). Posters advertising our Hillel's Birthright trips have been vandalized and stolen. And I can't count how many times I've been stared at or received jeers of "Free Palestine" simply because I'm visibly Jewish and Israeli.

This is not normal. Jewish students should not have to deal with constant attacks on who they are. No student, no matter their identity, should either.

The problem we face is this: When antisemitism ensues on our campus, many students do not know where to turn. Unaware of the protections Title VI affords them, they get lost in bureaucracy and struggle to access resources. Incidents go unreported, perpetrators aren't held accountable, and hate continues to go unchecked.

By designating a central, specialized person students can turn to when incidents of hate, no matter how big or small, happen, this legislation can help stop the cycle. I urge you to take a strong stand against hate of any kind and vote YES on this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Einav Tsach  
University of Maryland, College Park

## **SB435 Title VI coordinator.pdf**

Uploaded by: Meredith Weisel

Position: FAV



**Maryland General Assembly**  
**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**March 5, 2025**

Testimony of Meredith R. Weisel  
ADL Vice President, State and Local Advocacy

ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is pleased to submit this testimony in **support of Senate Bill 435, *Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools – Title VI Coordinators (Remove Discrimination in Education Act)***, which requires all institutions of higher education and local school systems within the state to designate a Title VI Coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

As you may know, ADL is a leading anti-hate organization founded in 1913 with a mission to “stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” Today, ADL continues to fight all forms of antisemitism and bias, using innovation and partnerships to drive impact. A global leader in combating antisemitism, countering extremism and battling bigotry wherever and whenever it happens, ADL works to ensure a just and inclusive society for all.

We are facing a troubling rise in antisemitism, particularly on college and university campuses and in our K-12 schools. During the 2023-2024 academic year, ADL recorded over 1,400 antisemitic incidents on campuses across the nation. On numerous occasions, disturbing rhetoric escalated into aggressive actions, as protests morphed into encampments that included calls for universities to cut ties with Jewish institutions and were frequently sites of harassment against Jewish people on campus. These activities created an environment of fear and hostility for Jewish students and faculty. According to ADL’s Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, in 2023, Maryland had 129 antisemitic K-12 school incidents—a 461% increase from 2022 and the fourth highest state for K-12 incidents in the country.

Further, ADL in partnership with Hillel International and College Pulse fielded a survey of college students at 135 universities across the United States. The results were reported on Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup> and noted that 83% of Jewish college students have experienced or witnessed antisemitism firsthand since the October 7<sup>th</sup> attack. 41% of Jewish students felt the need to hide their Jewish identity and one-in-four felt compelled to take security precautions. The most alarming statistic is that two-thirds of Jewish students lack confidence in their university’s ability to prevent antisemitic incidents. That is why bills like **SB435** are so crucial in this current environment.

Title VI states that “no person in the United States shall, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” This includes discrimination based on a group’s actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics. A

hostile environment exists if the harassment denies or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the institution's educational programs and activities.

Colleges and universities must take prompt action that is reasonably calculated to end the harassment, eliminate the hostile environment, and prevent the harassment from recurring, or they risk violating Title VI. However, students are not always aware of these protections under Title VI, or how to engage them effectively. At the same time, colleges and universities may not be equipped to comply with Title VI and ensure that all students are protected from discrimination and harassment.

**SB435** seeks to address this issue by requiring each State institution of higher learning and local school systems to designate a Title VI Coordinator. This Coordinator would be tasked with overseeing compliance with Title VI, providing training and educational resources regarding Title VI laws and regulations, and documenting and investigating complaints. This individual would serve a purpose similar to a Title IX Coordinator.

In fact, the University of Maryland has already hired a designated Title VI coordinator. **SB435** would encourage other state universities to follow suit.

**We urge the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to give  
Senate Bill 435 a favorable report.**

# **Testimony in support of SB0435 - Institutions of H**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0435\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV  
03/05/2025  
Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON SB#/0435 – FAVORABLE**

**Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools - Title VI  
Coordinators (Remove Discrimination in Education Act)**

**TO:** Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy and the  
Environment Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am  
submitting this testimony in support of SB#0435, Institutions of Higher Education and  
Elementary and Secondary Schools - Title VI Coordinators (Remove Discrimination in  
Education Act)**

While the administration in Washington and their allies are dedicated to rolling back all of the  
gains the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has given to American society this bill says that Maryland  
will resist those efforts.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that no person in the United States shall,  
on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be  
denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity  
receiving federal financial assistance. <sup>1</sup>

This act was passed to fight the systemic racism present in American society and provide for the  
full integration of our society, in every way, for the minority groups that had been suppressed  
from full participation in our country. Despite attempts to reinterpret the act for fortification of a  
white majority control of America that is not what this act is intended to do.

This bill requires the governing board of each institution of higher education in the State and  
local school systems to designate a Title VI Coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI of  
the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. It adds a requirement to enforce the act by authorizing a  
person alleging discrimination under certain provisions of law to file a complaint with a Title VI  
Coordinator of a local school system, as applicable.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0435.**

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<sup>1</sup>

[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/title\\_vi\\_civil\\_rights#:~:text=Title%20VI%20of%20the%20Civil%20Rights%20Act%20of%201964%20provides,activity%20receiving%20federal%20financial%20assistance.](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/title_vi_civil_rights#:~:text=Title%20VI%20of%20the%20Civil%20Rights%20Act%20of%201964%20provides,activity%20receiving%20federal%20financial%20assistance.)

# **SB435 Title VI Coordinators In Education.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sharon Maneki

Position: FAV



Subject: Favorable SB435: Title VI Coordinators

Date: March 5, 2025

From: National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

15 Charles Plaza, #3002

[President@nfbmd.org](mailto:President@nfbmd.org)

To: Education Energy and the Environment Committee

The Members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the members of the Education Energy and the Environment Committee to give SB435 a favorable report because it establishes clear lines of responsibilities for civil rights complaints.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a monumental step toward equality. Blind persons and other people with disabilities are entitled to an equal education. Equitable education means having the same opportunities that their nondisabled peers have. Having a definite person responsible in every local school system and higher education institution will make it easier for the students and faculty to know where to go when they have complaints.

Please vote Yes on SB435.

# **Testimony SB 435.pdf**

Uploaded by: Taylor Faust

Position: FAV

**Taylor Faust**

[Tfaust13@terpmail.umd.edu](mailto:Tfaust13@terpmail.umd.edu)

University of Maryland

02/27/2025

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

Chair Senator Brian J. Feldman

Vice Chair Senator Cheryl C. Kagan

Members of the Committee

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 435 – Remove Discrimination in Education Act**

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Taylor Faust, and I am a Junior at the University of Maryland. Like many others in my community, I have faced antisemitism on campus and have struggled to find the necessary support and resources to address it. I am asking you, begging you, to take action. I am testifying in strong support of Senate Bill 435 because Jewish students, like myself, deserve to be heard, and above all, safe.

As an advocate for Maryland's Jewish community, I have been told to my face that " Hamas has done nothing wrong." I have heard chants for an "intifada revolution." I have sat in a classroom where my peers, directed at me, claimed that "Jews always play the victim." The harassment continues with posters and chalk messages on campus that say "accept existence, or expect resistance," "there is only one solution," "go home settlers," and "Holocaust 2.0."

Despite these threats, the University of Maryland lacks the essential resources, expertise, and procedures to investigate and address antisemitism effectively. Jewish students frequently turn to me looking for support, especially when facing classroom discrimination, but right now, there are few meaningful options for recourse. Senate Bill 435 is not just necessary, it is urgent. This bill will establish a **Title IV Coordinator** on every campus in Maryland to ensure that antisemitism and other forms of discrimination are taken seriously. The rampant hate targeting Jewish students must be addressed, and universities must be held accountable.

Importantly, Title IV Coordinators will not only support Jewish students— they will protect **all** students. Hate is a disease— it spreads, and if left unchecked, it consumes everything in its path. Today, my community is under attack, but discrimination is a widespread and growing issue. Passing SB 435 will send a **clear message**: hate and discrimination have no place in our learning environments.

I urge you— please vote **in favor** of SB 435 to protect me and all other students from discrimination and hate. Protect every student who just wants to feel safe on their own campus.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Taylor Faust

University of Maryland

# **Testimony in Support of SB0435 - Uriel Appel.pdf**

Uploaded by: Uriel Appel

Position: FAV

## **Uriel Appel**

uriel.appel@gmail.com  
University of Maryland, College Park  
March 3rd, 2025

### **Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**

Chair Senator Brian J. Feldman  
Vice Chair Senator Cheryl C. Kagan  
Members of the Committee

### **Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 435 – Remove Discrimination in Education Act**

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Uriel Appel, and I am a third-year student at the University of Maryland. I am testifying today in strong support of Senate Bill 435 because, as a Jewish student, I have personally experienced antisemitism on my campus.

In November of 2023, the administration of UMD hosted a town hall meeting at the Jewish center of our campus, Hillel, following a pro-Palestinian riot chanting for an intifada. The Intifada was a movement in 1987 and in 2000 calling for the murder and eradication of the Jews, resulting in the death of over 1,500 individuals. In response, the university admins held a town hall meeting with 250 Jewish students in the Hillel building, where they told us that the Intifada was a peaceful protest. Another admin stated that our fear was only in our heads.

CAN MAKE THIS UMD SPECIFIC. Unfortunately, when incidents like this occur, universities often lack the resources, expertise, and clear procedures to properly investigate and address them. Many Jewish students feel they have nowhere to turn when they are harassed, intimidated, or discriminated against. SB 435 is essential because it will establish a Title VI Coordinator at every college and university in Maryland, ensuring that students facing antisemitism have a designated expert to report incidents and that institutions are held accountable for responding appropriately.

This bill is not just about Jewish students—it's about ensuring that all students facing racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination have a trusted and transparent process for seeking help. Passing SB 435 will send a clear message that Maryland schools will not tolerate discrimination and that students will have the protections they deserve.

I urge you to vote in favor of SB 435 to protect all students from discrimination.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Uriel Appel  
University of Maryland, College Park

# **Maureen Wambui Testimony in Support of Senate Bill**

Uploaded by: Maureen Wambui

Position: FWA



Maureen Wambui

7827 Rolling View Ave, Nottingham, MD, 21236

Maureen.w.m.2030@gmail.com

03/03/2025

The Honorable Members of the Seante Committee

Maryland General Assembly, Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 435 (SB0435) with Amendments - Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools - Title VI Coordinators (Remove Discrimination in Education Act)**

Hearing Date: March 05, 2025

Chairperson and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

My name is Maureen Wambui, and I am a proud Immigrant, parent, Community advocate and resident of Legislative District 8 in Maryland. I am here today to express my strong **support** for Senate Bill 435, the Remove Discrimination in Education Act. This bill is a necessary step toward ensuring equity, accountability, and safety in Maryland's educational institutions.

Discrimination in schools and higher education institutions continues to be a pressing issue, disproportionately impacting students of color and other marginalized communities. SB0435 seeks to address this by requiring each educational institution and local school system to designate a Title VI Coordinator—an individual responsible for enforcing federal civil rights protections under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**Why This Bill Matters:**

**Improves Oversight & Accountability** – Having a dedicated Title VI Coordinator ensures that discrimination complaints are handled properly, promptly, and fairly. This will increase transparency and prevent cases from being ignored or mishandled.

**Creates Safer Learning Environments** – A clear anti-discrimination framework means students, parents, and educators have a trusted resource to turn to when facing or witnessing discrimination. This will foster a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all students.

**Strengthens Compliance with Federal Law** – While Title VI is a federal requirement, many schools lack a structured approach to enforcing it. By mandating these positions, SB0435 ensures better compliance with civil rights laws across Maryland's education system.

**Proposed Amendment for Stronger Impact:**

While this bill is an essential step forward, I encourage an amendment requiring annual training for Title VI Coordinators to ensure they remain informed on best practices, legal updates, and effective implementation strategies. This will maximize the effectiveness of their role and strengthen the bill's impact.

By passing SB0435, Maryland will take a proactive stance against discrimination in schools, ensuring that every student—regardless of race, color, or national origin—has access to a safe, supportive, and fair educational experience. I strongly urge this committee to vote in favor of SB0435 and help create a more just and inclusive Maryland.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Wambui

# **Senate Bill 435-v2.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael David

Position: FWA

RE: Senate Bill 435, Remove Discrimination in Education Act

Vote Favorable, with Amendments.

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I represent the Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group (HCJAG):

<https://hocojag.org/>. I am a member of HCJAG's Board of Directors. HCJAG, in conjunction with our colleagues throughout Maryland, focuses on combating antisemitism. This testimony focuses on hateful behavior in Maryland's school systems.

Within the last couple of years, the Office of Civil Rights Department of Education OCR DoE has identified five secondary schools and one University, in Maryland, where Complaints of Race and National Origin Discriminations merited investigations.

The investigation of the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) regarding harassment of Jewish students in years 2023-2024 is exemplary. OCR concluded "a hostile environment likely existed for Jewish Students in the School System [SS] but ... the SS did not asses ... any incidents ... [and] did not take steps to redress any such hostile environment." Moreover, the SS did not record, maintain, nor provided records to OCR. Further yet, "the SS counsel acknowledged that none of the policies and procedures [of HCPSS] include a provision requiring that the SS staff consider whether reported incident of shared ancestry discrimination create or contribute to a hostile environment."

<https://ocrcas.ed.gov/sites/default/files/ocr-letters-and-agreements/03241154-a.pdf>

In the 2023-2024 school year, beyond events at school demonstrations/protests, 28 incidents of shared ancestry discriminations were reported to the 16 schools within the HCPSS, including threats to kill Jews, slurs like "dirty Jew," equating Jews with Hitler's action, and much more. But, more antisemitic incidents took place during the school demonstration/protests and more incidents yet, were related to the protests, before and after the protests. "[S]everal Jewish students stayed home on the day of the walkout, specifically because of the walkout." "All of the walkouts were sponsored and organized by each of the schools' Muslim Student Union (MSU) or Muslim Student Associations (MSAS)." *Id.*

In light of the record number of national origin discrimination cases and the failure of the schools to respond, it is laudable that Senators Waldstreicher and Jackson sponsored SB 435, to designate Title VI Coordinator at schools.

But, amendments are needed to create an effective school policy. Here is one amendment. Add under 11-409 and 26-706, for each under article (B), one clause, that the Coordinator shall:

**"Take proactive steps to schedule demonstrations, programs and activities in a manner to prevent creating a hostile environment for Title VI identifiable protected classes."**

When '435 passes and is implemented at school district levels, it should create a requirement that protest organizers obtain a Permit for their plans, have their plans vetted by a school administrator, and face consequences for not respecting the Permit and allowed school public event rules.

Moreover, we think that a procedure is needed to investigate violence, threats, and intimidation during protest events, as well as non-compliance with the Permit and reports of the investigation being created. The OCR Settlement cited above highlights this need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Michael David

Member, HCJAG Board of Directors

# **SB0435\_MACC\_OPP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Drew Jabin

Position: UNF

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

March 5, 2025

**SB 435 - Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools - Title VI  
Coordinators (Remove Discrimination in Education Act)****Position: Unfavorable**

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The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, respectfully opposes **SB 435**. This legislation requires all community colleges to designate a Title VI Coordinator to oversee compliance with federal civil rights laws, investigate complaints, and provide training on anti-discrimination policies. While MACC fully supports the intention behind this bill and the importance of ensuring compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, there are substantial concerns about the financial and administrative burden this requirement places on community colleges.

Community colleges already employ staff who oversee compliance with federal and state civil rights laws, including Title VI. However, at many institutions, these responsibilities are assigned to individuals who manage multiple areas, including Title IX, student conduct, and equity initiatives. Requiring a designated Title VI Coordinator as a standalone role creates a large financial challenge for institutions that must balance compliance obligations with limited resources.

MACC appreciates the intent of this legislation and supports many efforts to promote equity and protect students from discrimination. However, we encourage a thoughtful approach that considers the existing structures in place at community colleges. We look forward to working with the sponsor to explore solutions that ensure compliance while maintaining flexibility for institutions. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **UNFAVORABLE** vote on **SB 435**, as written.

Please contact Brad Phillips ([bphillips@mdacc.org](mailto:bphillips@mdacc.org)) or Drew Jabin ([djabin@mdacc.org](mailto:djabin@mdacc.org)) with questions.

# **SB435\_USM\_INFO.pdf**

Uploaded by: Andy Clark

Position: INFO





# UNIVERSITY SYSTEM *of* MARYLAND

## SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Senate Bill 435

### Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools - Title VI Coordinators

March 5, 2025

### Letter of Information

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on Senate Bill 435. The bill requires institutions of higher education, including those comprising the University System of Maryland (USM), to designate a coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The USM comprises twelve distinguished institutions, and three regional higher education centers. We award eight out of every ten bachelor's degrees in the State. Each of the USM's 12 institutions has a distinct and unique approach to the mission of educating students and promoting the economic, intellectual, and cultural growth of its surrounding community. These institutions are located throughout the state, from Western Maryland to the Eastern Shore, with the flagship campus in the Washington suburbs. The USM includes three Historically Black Institutions, comprehensive and research universities, and the country's largest public online institution.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is considered "cornerstone" legislation that prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Across the USM, Title VI receives the attention and care the law requires and the community deserves. In a few cases, Title VI complaints are handled by the Title IX coordinator. At other institutions, those responsibilities fall to the assistant vice president for equity and civil rights; fair practices officers; assistant vice president for student success; and when involving employees, the chief human resources officer. Staff in these roles are often also responsible for providing strategic vision and leadership on compliance with all categories covered by an institution's discrimination and harassment policies & procedures.

As written, USM is concerned with the language ***"requiring the governing board of each institution of higher education in the State and local school systems to designate a Title VI Coordinator."*** This responsibility should be designated to each individual campus not the governing board which is our Board of Regents.

Our institutions have clear, standardized processes for handling Title VI complaints. Generally, these procedures are guided by non-discrimination policies and related procedures. Complaints can be filed with staff members (via phone or a central email address) as well as via online reporting forms and hotlines. Although anonymous complaints are harder to investigate, they can be made. When the complainant is known, staff conduct an intake meeting with the Complainant in order to obtain any and

all relevant information required for an assessment of the matter. The concerns would be assessed to determine, if true, if the alleged behavior constitutes discrimination. If so, the allegations would be investigated pursuant to appropriate policies and procedures and a determination would be made and resolutions would follow. Discrimination complaints against non-students are handled in a similar fashion but often by human resources offices. To ensure the community is aware of their right to file a complaint, the process is shared online by several offices (offices of the presidents, student affairs, human resources, equity/civil rights, etc.) across campuses, in campus policies and procedures, during orientation, and often annually to the entire campus community via email. Finally, there are no federal guidelines for training, but USM institutions do provide (and in some cases mandate) Title VI or non-discrimination training to different members of the campus community.

The very critical Title VI work is happening at our institutions. It is the System's hope that this bill is not requiring a new, discrete, specifically named Title VI coordinator, as that would be challenging due to the current budget crisis. Thank you for allowing the USM to share this information as the Committee considers Senate Bill 435.



## **SB0435- State Board- LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Carey Wright

Position: INFO

To: Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

Bill: SB0435- Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools - Title VI Coordinators

Date: March 05, 2025

Position: Information

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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is sending this letter of information on **SB0435 - Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools - Title VI Coordinators**. This bill specifies that local education agencies (LEAs) must designate a Title VI Coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); LEA Title VI Coordinators must forward complaints to the State Superintendent; and authorizes individuals alleging Title VI discrimination to file a complaint with a LEA Title VI Coordinator, the State Superintendent, or both, effective July 1, 2025.

### **Current Practice**

Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color and national origin in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. Title VI also prohibits discrimination against individuals who are limited English proficient (LEP) and requires recipients of federal funding to provide meaningful language access to individuals who speak limited English. LEP refers to individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. These individuals may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type or service, benefit, or encounter.

All twenty-four (24) local education agencies (LEAs) currently have non-discrimination policies that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, and national origin, among other protected categories, and currently have staff designated to ensure compliance with these regulations although they may not be classified as Title VI Coordinator. LEAs direct parties to contact designated offices to address complaints of this nature.

Additionally, Md. Code Ann., Educ. 26-705 currently permits individuals to file a complaint with the State Superintendent alleging discrimination on said protected categories against a county board, public prekindergarten program, public primary or secondary school, nonpublic prekindergarten program that receives State funds and nonpublic primary or secondary school that receives State funds.

MSDE posts the Nondiscrimination in Education Procedure on its website. This complaint procedure encompasses MSDE receiving complaints; requesting a response to the LEA about

allegations; considering mediation options; reviewing allegations; issuing a written decision; reopening complaints, where applicable; and notifying parties of appeal rights.

### **SB0435**

SB0435 does not indicate the purpose of LEA Title VI Coordinators forwarding internal discrimination complaints received to the State Superintendent nor does it indicate a period when Title VI Coordinators must complete this action. It is not clear whether the purpose of forwarding complaints to the State Superintendent is to monitor, provide oversight and/or recordkeeping of complaints received at the local level or whether the purpose is to have MSDE assume responsibility for addressing the complaint at the State level.

SB0435 also cites that individuals may file Title VI complaints with the Title VI Coordinator, State Superintendent, or both. SB0435 currently reads as if both the local LEA and MSDE must address Title VI allegations simultaneously, which could result in repeated administrative tasks, investigation, and use of governmental resources for a single complaint, from two separate agencies during the same period. Moreover, Md. Code Ann., Educ. 26-705 currently does not prohibit individuals from filing a complaint with the State Superintendent if a complaint is open with the LEA; therefore, the option to file complaints with appropriate LEA staff and the State Superintendent presently exists.

MSDE is committed to continuing to bolster equal access to education based on race, color, national origin, and if the agency received clarification on the purpose of these changes to existing law, it would assist in determining the overall operational and fiscal impact.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB0435**. Please contact Delinda Johnson Blake, [delinda.blake1@maryland.gov](mailto:delinda.blake1@maryland.gov), or Dr. Akilah Alleyne, [Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov), for any additional information.

## **SB 435 - Title VI Coordinators.pdf**

Uploaded by: Matt Power

Position: INFO



## Letter of Information

### House Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees *Senate Bill 435 (Waldstreicher) Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools – Title VI Coordinators*

Matt Power, President

[mpower@micua.org](mailto:mpower@micua.org)

March 5, 2025

On behalf of the member institutions of the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA) and the nearly 55,000 students we serve, I thank you for the opportunity to provide a letter of information to [Senate Bill 435 \(Waldstreicher\) Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools – Title VI Coordinators](#).

SB 435 would require “each institution of higher education to designate a Title VI Coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964”. The legislation has enumerated the tasks and responsibilities of a Title VI Coordinator, such as promoting equal access and participation in programs and activities, providing training and educational resources, documenting and investigating complaints, and maintaining records and reports.

MICUA institutions support the practice of promoting equity, fairness, access, and inclusivity on the campuses and are compliant with Title VI. Our campuses offer a myriad of diverse training and resources for many protections, including Title IX. However, schools will bear a substantial increase in costs to employ a designated Title VI Coordinator. Passage of SB 435 would impose on MICUA institutions an expectation to allocate funding in their overly committed budgets to invest in training, consultation, and policy drafting. Currently, MICUA institutions do not have the budget resources or strategic planning for the addition of a position dedicated to Title VI. Several considerations and costs are associated with this new role requirement for institutions of higher education that go beyond designating a Title VI Coordinator.

Between fiscal years 2024 and 2025, the Sellinger program received a 48% reduction in funding. These reductions have had negative repercussions at all the MICUA institutions. Due to changes in the funding formula, the reduction was not spread equitably across all our institutions. Some institutions suffered much more significant reductions, resulting in a loss of enrollment and services provided. The likely minimum salary and benefits of a designated Title VI Coordinator is anticipated to be \$100,000 and a small-scale institution with a reduced budget would encounter challenges to commit funding to hire an individual for the role.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information on behalf of our institutions regarding Senate Bill 435. If you have any questions, please contact Irnande Altema, Associate Vice President for Government and Business Affairs, [ialtema@micua.org](mailto:ialtema@micua.org).