



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: February 12, 2025
RE: SB451- Adult Education – High School Diploma by
Examination – Requirements and Study

The MLLC supports SB451 – Adult Education – High School Diploma by Examination – Requirements and Study

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 SB451.

SB451 will benefit Maryland's Latino community by addressing current education disparities and enhancing economic opportunities. In 2022, the national dropout rate for Hispanic students was 7.9% higher than the overall rate of 5.3%.¹ By providing the GED entirely in Spanish, this bill will work to remove a barrier to educational achievement for Latino students. Improved educational attainment can lead to greater economic stability. Data shows that individuals with a GED earn approximately \$700 more per month than those with only some high school education.² This bill actively invests in the economic and social mobility of the Latino community, making it an important bill for the Latino Caucus.

This bill makes important changes to individuals' access to a high school diploma through the GED test by mandating the Department of Labor allow individuals to take all four sections in the same language, choosing between Spanish and English. In addition, the bill requires that the Department of Labor evaluate the feasibility and costs of offering the test in other languages, in addition to Spanish, and submit these findings in a report to the General Assembly. This report is an important step in improving educational outcomes and economic stability for non-native English speakers across the state.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on SB451.

¹ [Nation Center for Educational Statistics. Status Dropout Rates, 2024.](#)

² [Ewert, Stephanie. "GED Recipients Have Lower Earnings, Are Less Likely to Enter College." *Census.Gov*, 8 Oct. 2021.](#)

