

FAVORABLE
House Bill 325

Adult Education – High School Diploma by Examination – Requirements and Study

House Ways & Means Committee
January 29, 2025

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The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 325, which would require the Maryland Department of Labor to allow an individual to take all components of the General Educational Development (GED) test in the same language from the English or Spanish language examinations offered by the Department. It would also require the Department to study the feasibility and cost of offering the GED test in additional languages and to report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Offering the GED test in multiple languages is a common-sense measure to make a high-school equivalent credential more accessible to test-takers from a variety of linguistic backgrounds. Expanding opportunities for community members to earn a GED credential promotes equity and yields wide-reaching social benefits—those with a GED earn more than those without a high school diploma or equivalent, and some research indicates that children's literacy and academic development benefits when a parent earns a GED.¹ The measures in this bill are especially relevant to Maryland's increasingly multilingual workforce, and we applaud steps to increase educational access at every life stage.

We urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on House Bill 325.

¹ Increased Educational Attainment among U.S. Mothers and their Children's Academic Expectations. National Library of Medicine (2018). <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5793933/>