



January 27, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Ways and Means Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Testimony in Support of House Bill 325

Dear Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Board of the Montgomery County Latino Democratic Club to express our full support for House Bill 325, concerning Adult Education - High School Diploma by Examination - Requirements and Study. This bill is a giant step forward in leveling the playing field in education and economic opportunities for Maryland's Latino community.

The fact that the United States does not have an officially designated language emphasizes our identity as a melting pot of cultures and communities. Public policy must mirror such diversity ensuring that language is not a barrier in seeking an education. By limiting the Reasoning Through Language Arts (RLA) module of the GED to English only, a burden is placed on hardworking individuals seeking to improve their lives and contribute to their communities.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 700,000 Latinos reside within the State of Maryland, comprising about 11% of the population. However, language remains a barrier to educational attainment and economic progress. Allowing all components of the GED to be taken in a single language, including Spanish, would better enable our communities to succeed.

States like California, Texas, Florida, and New York have already recognized the importance of inclusivity in education by allowing all modules of the GED to be taken in English or Spanish. These states have shown that fair testing alternatives not only eliminates barriers, it promotes a more inclusive and skilled workforce. Maryland has a chance to join these states as a leader in providing equal access to educational opportunities.

House Bill 325 invests in the future of Maryland by allowing thousands more to realize their educational and career ambitions, thus strengthening the workforce, and staying true to the multicultural character of our state.

We strongly urge you to support HB 325 and help ensure that all Marylanders, regardless of their native language, have an equal opportunity to succeed.



LATINO DEMOCRATIC CLUB
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Kind regards,

Omar Lazo
President

Latino Democratic Club of Montgomery County