



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Vanessa A. Atterbeary, Chair
Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Vice Chair
Ways and Means Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: January 30, 2025
RE: HB337 – State Lottery Fund – Laurel Race Course –
Local Impact Aid

The MLLC supports HB337 – State Lottery Fund – Laurel Race Course – Local Impact Aid

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 HB337.

This bill directly supports backstretch workers at the Laurel Race Course, many of whom are Latino immigrants. These workers often face barriers such as limited access to healthcare, language challenges, and social service gaps. The bill ensures that funds are used for essential services like health and mental health care, addiction support, counseling, and wellness programs, which are critical for the well-being of Latino workers and their families. By requiring nonprofits receiving funds to employ Spanish-speaking staff or offer translation services, the bill acknowledges and addresses the unique needs of non-native English speakers, promoting equitable access to resources.

Specifically, this bill proposes requiring the Maryland Comptroller to distribute \$500,000 annually in supplemental local impact aid from the proceeds of the Racetrax lottery game to Anne Arundel County, Howard County, and the City of Laurel. The aid is designated for programs and services benefiting communities surrounding the Laurel Race Course, including health and mental health services, counseling, addiction treatment, social services, and wellness programs.

The mandate that Anne Arundel County allocate its share of the funds as grants to nonprofit organizations with experience supporting backstretch workers and providing services for non-English speakers will have substantial impacts on the Latino community. This legislation represents a step forward in addressing systemic inequities and ensuring that Latino communities surrounding the race course receive the aid and support they need.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB337.