

WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor



YAAKOV "JAKE" WEISSMANN
Acting Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

TITLE: HB 1277 Education - Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity - Establishment

DATE: March 10, 2026

COMMITTEE: Appropriations

POSITION: Letter of Concern

SUMMARY OF BILL: HB1277 establishes the Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity as a partnership between the University of Maryland, College Park Campus, and Morgan State University to promote literacy statewide. The bill mandates a new \$3 million appropriation in FY 28, split evenly between USM and Morgan State, to establish the Institute. The mandate increases to \$4 million in FY 2029, \$5 million in FY 2030, and \$6 million annually in FY 2031. Beginning in FY 2029, the funding is directed to the Institute rather than to the two universities individually.

EXPLANATION: The creation of a new \$3 million mandate in FY 2028, and its escalation to \$6 million annually by FY 2031 represents a significant and growing fiscal impact on the State budget. Given forecasted out-year deficits and significant uncertainty surrounding federal budget and policy changes, the State faces substantial fiscal pressure entering FY 2027 and escalating into FY 2028, making this level of new spending difficult to absorb.

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