

HB1277\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV  
03/10/2026  
Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON HB#/1277 – FAVORABLE**  
**Education - Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity – Establishment**

**TO:** Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser, and members of the Appropriations Committee  
**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#1277, **Education - Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity – Establishment**

Based on the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) results released in August 2025 for the 2024-2025 school year, student literacy proficiency (English Language Arts) showed progress but significant, persistent gaps across racial groups.<sup>1</sup>

Statewide Literacy Proficiency by Race/Ethnicity (2024-2025)

- Asian: 75.3%
- White: 67.9%
- American Indian: 44.9%
- Black/African American: 39.4%
- Hispanic/Latino: 33.7%

Key Findings

- Gains
- Gaps

In specific districts like Baltimore City, literacy proficiency was lower (e.g., 28.1% for Black students, 26.6% for Hispanic students).

This bill will meet that challenge represented by the testing results by establishing the Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity organized as a partnership between the University of Maryland, College Park Campus and Morgan State University to serve as a State-funded research and technical assistance center to promote literacy in the State; and requiring the Governor to include in the annual budget bill certain appropriations to the University of Maryland, College Park Campus, Morgan State University, and the Institute.

Maryland must leave no one behind and increase literacy for everyone will meet that goal.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/1277.**

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<sup>1</sup> Google AI Search “literacy rates in maryland by race 2025”