



Office of the President

**Morgan State University Testimony
Dr. David K. Wilson, President**

**House Bill 1277 (Delegate Stephanie Smith)
Education – Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity – Establishment**

March 10, 2026

Favorable

Chair Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Ann Keiser, and members of the Appropriations Committee. We, at Morgan, thank you for the opportunity to share our position on House Bill 1277. The summary of the Bill states the following: *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 certain appropriations to the University of Maryland, College Park Campus, Morgan State University, and the Institute.*

Morgan State University is the Preeminent Public Urban Research University in Maryland, known for its excellence in teaching, intensive research, effective public service and community engagement. Morgan prepares diverse and competitive graduates for success in a global interdependent society.

Morgan State University is in support of HB1277. The collaborative work that gave rise to the Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity (MILE) exemplifies the type of shared vision and academic partnership that strengthens educational opportunity across the State. This effort reflects the idea, captured by author Bell hooks, that “the classroom remains the most radical space of possibility... urging all of us to... think and rethink, so that we can create new visions.” HB1277 enables the realization of those new visions for Maryland’s children.

HB1277 fortifies Maryland’s leadership in statewide literacy research, ensures stable State funding for this critical work, deepens strategic collaboration between Morgan State University and the University of Maryland, and expands research and learning opportunities for students and faculty. By formally recognizing the Institute and the inter-institutional partnership supporting it, the bill affirms Morgan’s essential role in shaping Maryland’s literacy landscape and ensures that equity and research excellence—core pillars of Morgan’s mission—remain central to the State’s educational strategy.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a **favorable** report on House Bill 1277.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DKW', with a small dot above the 'i'.

David K. Wilson

President

Morgan State University