

The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary

Chair, Ways and Means Committee

Lowe House Office Building, Room 131

6 Bladen Street

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support for HB 0021, Child Influencers Protection Act

Dear Chair Atterbeary,

Maryland Latinos Unidos respectfully submits strong support for House Bill 0021, the Child Influencers Protection Act. HB 0021 is before the House Ways and Means Committee during the 2026 Legislative Session and addresses the growing use of children in monetized online content without adequate legal protections.

HB 0021 establishes requirements to protect minors who appear in monetized digital media, including provisions related to compensation, recordkeeping, and the safeguarding of a child's financial and personal interests. As digital platforms increasingly drive income generation, children are often placed at the center of content creation without the labor protections that exist in more traditional industries.

Latino and immigrant families are disproportionately affected by gaps in digital labor protections. Many families turn to social media and online platforms as supplemental or primary income sources due to wage instability, language barriers, or limited access to traditional employment. Children in these households may appear frequently in monetized content, sometimes without clear consent standards or long term financial safeguards.

HB 0021 promotes dignity, safety, and economic fairness for children by recognizing their labor and ensuring that earnings generated through their participation are preserved for their benefit. Protecting minors from financial exploitation and overexposure is especially critical for families navigating economic insecurity, where children may feel implicit pressure to contribute to household income.

The implications for Latino and immigrant communities are significant. This legislation affirms that economic opportunity should not come at the expense of child welfare. It also establishes guardrails that support healthy family decision making, protect children's futures, and reduce the risk of long term harm associated with unregulated digital labor. MLU can amplify these protections through family education, digital literacy initiatives, and advocacy that centers child well being in emerging technology spaces.

Maryland Latinos Unidos urges a favorable report on HB 0021. As digital economies evolve, Maryland must ensure that its laws evolve as well, placing children's rights and protections at the forefront.

Sincerely,

Carlos Orbe, Jr.

Communications and Public Affairs Specialist

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