



BILL: SB 645
POSITION: FAV – Favorable
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
DATE: February 24, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Maryland Department of Disabilities
217 East Redwood Street, Suite 1300, Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is pleased to submit this letter of support for **SB 645, State Board of Sign Language Interpreters – Membership**. This legislation updates the structure, requirements, and deadlines for the State Board of Sign Language Interpreters (“the Board”).

SB 645 adds a seat for MDOD to the Board and includes MDOD in the process of developing regulations for interpreter certification. MDOD recognizes the tremendous amount of time and energy the current Board members have put into carrying out the Board’s statutory mandate to date, and we are honored to be included in this work moving forward.

MDOD has a deep interest in the delivery of consumer-oriented, high-quality ASL services. MDOD houses the Telecommunications Access of Maryland (TAM) Program, which oversees the delivery of statewide Maryland Relay services (including Video Relay Services) that provide the Deaf, Deafblind, and hard of hearing communities with accessible telecommunications and teleconferencing services. TAM also has a Communication Facilitator Service, which focuses on meeting the highly individualized communications needs of Deafblind individuals. ASL is not only a critical feature of TAM’s work, many of TAM’s staff are themselves ASL users and they look forward to offering their combination of lived experience and professional expertise to the work of the Board.

Thank you for your consideration. MDOD respectfully requests a **favorable report on SB 645**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol A. Beatty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol A. Beatty
Secretary, Department of Disabilities