

Potomac Chapter of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.

Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

Maryland House
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**HB1192 – State Board of Sign Language Interpreters – Membership and Licensing
Position: Unfavorable Unless Amended Witness Testimony**

Hearing Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 - 1:00 PM

Hello Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Committee,

I understand that the time allotment is 2 minutes. I am asking the committee's indulgence as I may extend past that time to allow for the interpreting process.

My name is Emily Dittmer, and I am the current President of the Potomac Chapter of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. PCRID is the Maryland and DC affiliate chapter for the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). Alongside the Maryland Association of the Deaf, PCRID supported the creation and passage of what is now the Maryland Interpreter Licensure Act. Through this process, PCRID's support of interpreter licensure has not changed.

However, I testify today on behalf of PCRID with an unfavorable unless amended stance on House Bill 1192.

While PCRID is in favor of the change implemented to the amendment regarding the addition of "or" in Section 9-2419 to allow for alternative pathways to certification, the amendment's intent and therefore impact remains.

PCRID opposes the addition of 4 government-affiliated board members-who are not required to have knowledge of the interpreting profession or sign language proficiency. This change in board composition creates an undue institutional influence and is a departure from the "carefully balanced board of the current licensure law, [whose members] reflect the lived and professional realities of the Deaf, DeafBlind, HOH, DeafDisabled and interpreting communities" (Boykins, p. 1). Additionally, PCRID opposes the addition of reporting requirements as they represent a misunderstanding of the landscape of the interpreting profession and impose an unnecessary administrative hurdle to the creation of the specialty licensure standards that protect individuals in highly vulnerable settings such as legal, medical, and educational.

What cannot be ignored are the implications this amendment carries by adding unique structural and reporting barriers on the only Maryland Occupational licensing board whose members all represent protected classes and operate professionally and/or personally in a language other than English (Boykins, p. 6).

The time constraints prevent me from detailing PCRID's opposition to the proposed legislation in full. PCRID submitted a report as written testimony on March 6, 2026 compiled by our Vice President, Carolyn Boykins, identifying each provision of the amendment along with our rationale for opposing. To better understand our unfavorable unless amended position towards HB1192, I strongly encourage committee members to read and carefully consider this report as it was written through the lens of subject matter expertise.

PCRID remains in full support of interpreter licensure. As such, we are urging the committee to preserve the intent of the original bill to protect the rights of Deaf, DeafBlind, HOH, and DeafDisabled Maryland residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Emily Dittmer
PCRID President
On Behalf of the PCRID Board and Members
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