



BILL: HB 1192
POSITION: FWA – Favorable with Amendments
COMMITTEE: Government, Labor, and Elections
DATE: March 6, 2026

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

Dear Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is pleased to submit this letter of support for **HB 1192, 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”).

HB 1192 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 would be honored to be included in this work moving forward. We note that MDOD would be happy to serve on the Board as either a voting or non-voting member, and would support an amendment, if one is proposed, that changes our status to a non-voting member. We place a higher value on our ability to participate in the conversation than on whether we have voting status. We also anticipate designating one of our staff who is proficient in ASL to represent MDOD, regardless of our voting status.

MDOD has a deep interest in the delivery of high-quality ASL to Marylanders who use ASL. MDOD houses the Telecommunications Access of Maryland (TAM) Program, which oversees the delivery of statewide Maryland 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 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 HB 1192**.

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