

The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins  
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee  
Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Support for House Bill 807 Education Teacher Preparation Programs English Language Learner Teacher Competency Requirements

Dear Chair Wilkins,

Maryland Latinos Unidos respectfully supports House Bill 807. This bill would strengthen teacher preparation by requiring programs to include training in English learner related teacher competencies across curriculum, and to include a dedicated course in teaching English learners beginning in the 2028 to 2029 academic year.

This legislation aligns directly with educational equity for Latino students and immigrant families. Latino children are a major part of Maryland's school age population, and many Latino students are English learners or live in households where English is not the primary language. When teachers are not prepared to deliver high quality instruction for multilingual learners, students can be misidentified as underperforming, excluded from advanced coursework, or pushed out through disengagement and chronic absenteeism.

House Bill 807 is a practical, systems level solution: it improves the pipeline of educators statewide so that English learners are supported from the first day in class. Strong preparation in multilingual instruction is also a retention strategy because teachers who have the tools to teach diverse learners are more likely to feel effective and remain in the profession.

This bill also supports long term workforce outcomes. English learners who receive strong instruction are more likely to meet graduation requirements, enroll in postsecondary pathways, and enter high skill career tracks. That is not only a student benefit. It supports Maryland's economy and reduces the need for later remediation.

Implications for Maryland Latinos Unidos and the communities we serve

House Bill 807 expands educational opportunity for Latino and immigrant students by improving instructional quality and increasing the likelihood that students can access rigorous coursework and graduate ready for college and careers. It strengthens the freedom of parents to trust that their children's school experience will not be limited by language barriers.

Maryland Latinos Unidos can amplify this bill's impact by partnering with teacher preparation programs and school systems to ensure that the competencies are culturally responsive and aligned with real classroom needs. We can also help build family facing communication in Spanish and other languages so families understand what stronger teacher preparation means for their children, and how to advocate for appropriate English learner supports.

For these reasons, Maryland Latinos Unidos respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 807.

Sincerely,

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