



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Chair
Delegate Jessica Feldmark, Vice Chair
Ways and Means Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: 2/19/2026
RE: HB676 - Maryland Financial Empowerment Center Network
Pilot Program – Establishment

The MLLC supports HB676 - Maryland Financial Empowerment Center Network Pilot Program – Establishment

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB676.

This bill establishes a pilot program for a statewide network of financial empowerment centers. The financial empowerment centers would provide free one-on-one financial counseling on topics such as savings, banking, and creditworthiness. This legislation could help Latinos improve personal and business finances by using the resources provided by the financial empowerment centers established through this bill.

According to Pew Research Center, 41% of Latino/Hispanic adults say “they know a great deal or fair amount” about their personal finances, however that percentage is lower than White, Black, and Asian adults. The same survey reveals that 21% of Hispanics are not confident in the following management skills: finding a credit report, creating a monthly budget to manage finances, creating a plan to pay off debt, or saving money. These data points illuminate the necessity for personal finance education for the Latino community, particularly education that does not have predatory practices and is not cost-prohibitive to access.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB676.