



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

Senate Bill 964

*County Boards of Education – Equal Access to Public Services for Individuals
With Limited English Proficiency*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Education, Health, and Environmental
Affairs Committee

Date: March 13, 2019

From: Michael Sanderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** SB 964. This bill creates a broad and unclear mandate on Boards of Education to provide a potentially wide range of materials in multiple languages.

Maryland schools already deliver a wide range of services for English language learners, including materials to assist with classroom accessibility and continued development of related skills. In addition, teachers and school leaders ensure communication with parents and guardians to seek collaborative guidance for children's education.

While surely well-intentioned, the open-ended nature of the requirements of SB 964 could challenge school systems to divert current resources toward potentially duplicative and costly new materials. If every textbook, manual, document, and written item is required to be provided in multiple languages that may vary based on changing demography, this could result in a meaningful and counterproductive reallocation of education resources.

MACo urges the Committee to issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report on SB 964, and to leave the manner of best delivering school materials in the hands of local Boards of Education and school leaders.