

SB0419. The Arc Maryland. Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Ande Kolp

Position: FAV



SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE

SB0419: Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program – Funding – Alterations

January 31, 2024

Position: Support

The Arc Maryland is the largest statewide advocacy organization dedicated to the rights and quality of life of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We support SB0419 in that it will extend the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Funding program which ensures specialized providers can deliver quality childcare to Marylanders with special needs. These are lifeline services utilized by many families throughout Maryland to have a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for their children with special healthcare needs. The program allows families to continue to work and contribute to our robust economy, and children to receive the early intervention services to which they are entitled to and need to survive and thrive.

Federal and state law mandates that young children with disabilities shall receive early intervention services in the natural environment, and special education services in the least restrictive environment. This means, to the extent possible, every child should receive services alongside the child's peers without disabilities. Separate education should only occur if success cannot be achieved with appropriate services and supports in a less restrictive setting.

Currently, the Maryland State Department of Education partners with certain organizations in the state to provide medically-based child care and early education services to children with medical diagnoses and those who have developmental delays, physical disabilities, and behavioral issues requiring specialized care. The Arc Montgomery County is one of the organizations that receives this grant funding and uses the funding to run its inclusive infant and childcare program. The program is a model not only in our state, but in our country, for how children with and without special healthcare needs can and should receive quality childcare- together. In The Arc Montgomery County program, all children benefit from the ratios of care and individualized approach.

We respectfully ask the Budget and Taxation Committee for a favorable report on SB0419.

For more information, please contact:

Ande Kolp, Executive Director, The Arc Maryland akolp@thearcmd.org

SB419 - Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Fun

Uploaded by: Andrew Nicklas

Position: FAV



January 31, 2024

To: The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
From: Adventist HealthCare
Re: SB419 – Therapeutic Childcare Program – Funding

POSITION: SUPPORT

SB419 continues an annual appropriation to support the development and education of some of the most vulnerable children in our state. Therapeutic Childcare Programs provide specialized childcare and educational programs for children with significant developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, or delays in social, emotional or behavioral functioning.

The Lourie Center for Children's Social & Emotional Wellness, a member of Adventist HealthCare, operates a Therapeutic Childcare Program focused on children experiencing significant social, emotional, and behavioral issues. Founded in 1983 as an outgrowth of a National Institute of Mental Health clinical research study, the Lourie Center is a pioneer and leader in the field of infant and child mental health. It now serves more than 4,000 children and families in the Washington metropolitan area.

The Lourie Center's program integrates early childhood mental health and education programming, serving families with high-risk children ages 3 to 5. Many of these children have experienced trauma in their home life and have been expelled from mainstream preschools or daycares due to safety concerns and disruptive behavior. By partnering with parents and caregivers and surrounding children with professionally trained staff, the program promotes the child's development and supports the family as a whole. It has an 80% success rate of integrating children into mainstream education programs.

The Lourie Center is one of three entities currently operating these programs in Maryland. Each program may serve a different population, but all serve children with the intense needs who require specialized care and whose development has been significantly disrupted. Before this funding was established, these programs were forced to rely on charitable donations to maintain services, jeopardizing their continued sustainability. SB419 provides security and stability for these vital programs by establishing a much-needed baseline of reliable funding.

For these reasons, Adventist HealthCare supports SB419 and encourages the committee to give **a favorable report.**



SB0419_MHAMD_Fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Ann Geddes

Position: FAV

Senate Bill 419 Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program – Funding - Alterations

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

January 31, 2024

Position: SUPPORT

Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMd) is a nonprofit education and advocacy organization that brings together consumers, families, clinicians, advocates and concerned citizens for unified action in all aspects of mental health and substance use disorders (collectively referred to as behavioral health). We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of SB 419.

SB 419 would extend the Therapeutic Childcare Grant Program, which the legislature established in 2022, past the FY25 sunset date in the original legislation. MHAMd strongly supports the continuation of the Grant Program.

It is not uncommon for very young children with social, emotional or behavioral challenges to be expelled from childcare settings. Young children are expelled at three times the rate of children in kindergarten through 12th grade.¹ Social/emotional/behavioral challenges among very young children are often the result of trauma, which can be linked to poverty. Expulsion of young children disproportionately affects children of color, males, children with disabilities, and those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged.² It can negatively impact a child's development and have lifetime consequences. Additionally, it puts tremendous burden on parents/caregivers.

Therapeutic childcare centers are one way to address the problem. By partnering with parents/caregivers to support the social-emotional development of children, helping them learn to manage behaviors, and addressing childhood trauma with evidence-based therapeutic interventions, therapeutic childcare centers can improve the trajectory of a child's life. One study of a therapeutic childcare center in Maryland that supported children with social/emotional/behavioral challenges found that 80% of children successfully transitioned to a regular kindergarten classroom setting.³

¹ National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness. Understanding and eliminating expulsion in early childhood programs. Accessed January 25, 2024.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/understanding-eliminating-expulsion-early-childhood-programs>

² Williams, P. and Yogman, M. Addressing early education and childcare expulsion. The American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement. October 2023. Accessed January 25, 2024.

<https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/152/5/e2023064049/194508/Addressing-Early-Education-and-Child-Care?autologincheck=redirected>

³ Yair, Z. et al. Changing developmental trajectory in high-risk families: the effectiveness of an attachment-informed Therapeutic Nursery Program for preschool children with complex emotional and behavioral problems. Attachment and Human Development. Vol 23 (3). 2021. Accessed January 25, 2024.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14616734.2020.1722717?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

Prior to the passage of SB 506 in the 2022 legislative session, which established the Therapeutic Childcare Grant Program, therapeutic childcare centers were funded with a patchwork of federal and state funds that were undependable. By establishing a stable grant program, the legislature provided for the fiscal stability of these important centers.

For these reasons MHAMD supports SB 419 and urges a favorable report.

Children's National Testimony - SB 419 - Julia DAn

Uploaded by: Austin Morris

Position: FAV



Testimony of Julia D'Angelo
Program Manager of School Strategies
Children's National Hospital
Co-Lead for the Early Childhood Education Work Group
before
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
IN SUPPORT OF
SB 419: Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program – Funding – Alterations

January 31, 2024

Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in favor of Senate Bill 419. My name is Julia D'Angelo, and I am a Program Manager of School Strategies and a co-lead for the Early Childhood Education (ECE) workgroup at Children's National Hospital. Children's National has been serving the nation's children since 1870. Nearly 60% of our patients are residents of Maryland, and we maintain a network of community-based pediatric practices, surgery centers and regional outpatient centers in Maryland.

Formed in 2023, our ECE workgroup is advocating for high quality, affordable early childhood centers and stronger connections between early childhood centers and hospitals as part of our 2022-2025 Community Health Improvement Plan. Federal law requires nonprofit hospitals to assess the health needs of the community and develop a plan to address those needs. The Children's National 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) utilized systematic, comprehensive data collection to help us understand and address the needs of the community we serve. Our analysis identified 12 key neighborhoods with the lowest Childhood Opportunity Index (COI) scores, including eight in Prince George's County, Maryland, that have been the focus for our ECE advocacy and programmatic initiatives.¹

Children's National and the ECE workgroup strongly support SB 419, with the stated intent of providing increased funding for providers that specialize in delivering high-quality childcare and education to children under 6 years of age with developmental and behavioral delays or difficulties.

¹ Children's National and HSC Health Care System's Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan can be found here: <https://www.childrensnational.org/in-the-community/child-health-advocacy-institute/community-affairs/improving-community-health>



According to a recent report from the Maryland Family Network, the percentage of children needing social/emotional accommodations lies between 36% to 54.9%.² While the American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommends integration of young children with disabilities into ECE programs as a way of promoting healthy development and promoting school readiness, many of our own patients and families find a lack of availability in ECE programs that can serve their special health and developmental needs.³⁴ Children's National feels that the funding increases proposed in SB 419 will help close gaps in our ECE workforce shortage, and ensure more ECE centers have the capacity and skills to provide high-quality services to children across the developmental and behavioral spectrum.

Children's National and the ECE workgroup also acknowledge the benefits of this legislation on all children throughout Maryland. Children without disabilities or special health care needs also benefit from inclusive experiences. The funding allocation in this bill has the potential to increase positive academic, developmental, social, and attitudinal outcomes for *all* children from its encouragement of inclusive experiences.⁵

As mentioned, systemic workforce issues and high employee turnover contribute to a lack of stable ECE options for children with special needs across Prince George's County and Maryland as a whole. Specifically, almost 1/3 of the childcare workforce left their positions in 2021.⁶ Children's National and the ECE Work Group feel strongly that adding funds to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program will increase the quantity and quality of ECE programs and providers that service children with diverse needs. We applaud the efforts of the Maryland General Assembly for prioritizing early childhood

² Maryland Child Care Resource Network. (2022). Trends in Child Care - 2022. In *Maryland Family Network*. <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/Trends%20in%20Child%20Care%202022.pdf>

³ COUNCIL ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, COUNCIL ON SCHOOL HEALTH; The Pediatrician's Role in Optimizing School Readiness. *Pediatrics* September 2016; 138 (3): e20162293. 10.1542/peds.2016-2293

⁴ Sarah E. McLellan, Marie Y. Mann, Joan A. Scott, Treeby W. Brown; *A Blueprint for Change: Guiding Principles for a System of Services for Children and Youth With Special Health Care Needs and Their Families*. *Pediatrics* June 2022; 149 (Supplement 7): e2021056150C. 10.1542/peds.2021-056150C

⁵ US Department of Education & US Department of Health & Human Services. (2023). POLICY STATEMENT ON INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS. In *EDBlogs*. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/policy-statement-on-inclusion-11-28-2023.pdf>

⁶ *Id.* See footnote 2.



education, which will benefit our state's youngest residents and their families, and request a favorable report on Senate Bill 419.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am happy to respond to any questions you may have.

SB 419_MFN_FAV_Morrow Therapeutic.pdf

Uploaded by: Beth Morrow

Position: FAV



Testimony Concerning SB 419
“Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations”
Submitted to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
January 31, 2024

Position: Support

Maryland Family Network (MFN) strongly supports SB 419, which would ensure continued funding for the Therapeutic Child Care Program (TCCP). Early intervention through a sufficiently funded TCCP will provide benefits to children and families and cost savings to the State. SB 419 fully deserves your favorable consideration.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. We have been active in state and federal debates on child care policy and are strongly committed to ensuring that children, along with their parents, have access to high-quality, affordable programs and educational opportunities.

MFN has long been a champion of early intervention for children with special needs as well as inclusive education for children of all ages. Child care programs that would be covered under TCCP, which are also known as therapeutic nurseries, work with children birth to age 5 whose significant social and emotional challenges, among other possible factors, put them at high-risk for poor school and life outcomes.

As recently as 2020, researchers found that 4 out of 5 children moved from therapeutic nurseries to “mainstream” kindergarten and maintained social and emotional gains through second grade. Therapeutic nurseries’ documented success in transitioning children into typical education placements not only improves the children’s outcomes but also saves the major costs associated with more intensive special education services.

MFN respectfully urges favorable consideration of SB 419.



Testimony_SB419.pdf

Uploaded by: Dennis Alexander

Position: FAV



Testimony in Support of SB419, Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
January 31, 2024, 1:00 pm
Respectfully submitted by
Dennis C. Alexander, Director of Government Relations

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee, on behalf of Easterseals, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support SB419 to restore funding to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program.

Easterseals is a nonprofit organization serving Maryland (except for the Eastern Shore), Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia, leading the way to full equity, inclusion, and access through direct and life-changing disability and community services to thousands of children and adults in our neighborhoods, regardless of their disability, military status, income, race, or age.

We currently operate eight successful child development centers and Head Start programs, five of which are located in Maryland. Our inclusive classrooms create an environment in which children of all abilities learn new skills, develop relationships, share a sense of belonging, prepare for school, and appreciate diversity in others. These programs provide early identification and intervention for disabilities and developmental delays.

The Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program is critical to organizations like Easterseals that specialize in providing early child development services to children under the age of 6 years who have developmental delays, physical disabilities, or delays in social, emotional, or behavioral functioning. Since so few child care providers are willing to accept these children, families with children who need this type of support seek out Easterseals and our centers are overwhelmed with more requests than we can fill. But because this care requires more highly trained staff and lower child-to-teacher ratios, the cost of providing these services limits the number of children we can serve. Support from programs like the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program is absolutely essential.

Thirty percent of the children enrolled in Easterseals child development programs have special needs that are behavioral health or medical in nature. However, these children are not evenly dispersed across the age groups that attend the programs. Most are from age 2 through Pre-Kindergarten, which means that 60% of children in some classrooms have special needs. This means that increased training and professional development is required to meet the needs of these children and provide an inclusive setting,

To better support these classrooms, Easterseals has invested heavily in training teachers to get the Registered Behavioral Technician certification. We also have staff trained in Applied Behavioral Analysis who can supervise the Registered Behavioral Technicians who develop the behavioral plans

and necessary interventions.

In summary, while other child care programs are unable or unwilling to serve these children with special needs, Easterseals continues to offer high quality, inclusive early child care that supports children with special behavioral and medical needs and helps them succeed by preparing them and their families for transition to kindergarten and beyond.

The Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program serves a critical role in helping us serve some of our most fragile children and I encourage you to support funding for this program.

SB419_Theraputic Child Care_KennedyKrieger_LOI.pdf

Uploaded by: Emily Arneson

Position: FAV



Kennedy Krieger Institute

Bradley L. Schlaggar, MD, PhD
President and CEO
Zanvyl Krieger Faculty Endowed Chair

*A comprehensive resource
for children with disabilities*

January 31, 2024

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chairman, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Support on Senate Bill 419 - Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations

Dear Chairman Guzzone,

Kennedy Krieger Institute is deeply grateful to Senators King and Zucker for introducing Senate Bill 419, the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program Funding and Alterations. This legislation is critical in ensuring that funding remains available for early education providers of our most fragile children.

Families and caregivers for children with complex medical needs have very few resources for integrated medically supported early childhood education. We believe it is part of our mission to serve children and their families through a stimulating MSDE (Maryland State Department of Education) accredited (five-star Maryland EXCELS rating) integrated childhood education center. As you are aware, Kennedy Krieger is home to four early childhood education programs, three that receive annual grants from these funds including:

- Parents and Children Together (PACT); Helping Children with Disabilities Therapeutic Nursery (Southeast Early Head Start)
- Parents and Children Together (PACT); World of Care
- Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD); Inclusive Pre-K (Center for Autism Services, Science and Innovation (CASSI) at Kennedy Krieger Institute)

These programs are built on an inclusion model – bringing together typically developing children with those who are neurodiverse or have medical needs to learn together in a safe and supportive environment.

By extending the funding for fiscal years after 2025, this legislation creates a level of sustainability that has not previously been present for early childhood providers of medically fragile children, although supplemental funding sources, i.e., government, foundation, and corporate grants, as well as donations from private philanthropy, continue to be needed to cover program costs. The prescribed amount, i.e., \$3,700,000 per year, does not consider inflation, annual cost-of-living adjustments, and the increasingly complex array of services our children and their families require each year.

Kennedy Krieger encourages the committee, when evaluating potential amendments for SB419, to consider incorporating cost of living adjustments, inflation, and other pressures of the economy. In addition, we encourage a tiered model, rather than a model with standardized cost per child, to be explored. The cost may be higher should a child need a dedicated aide, nurse, or other services not readily provided by the program. We strongly support considering the uniqueness of each child and their specific needs.

Currently, statewide, there are five programs receiving funds from the Maryland State Department of Education under this fund. However, as outlined in the annual report from MSDE to the budget committees submitted December 30, 2023, three new eligible early learning centers are coming online in fiscal year 2024 and will be receiving awards from this program. A prescribed amount at \$3,700,000 per year does not account for new programs nor the expansion of available programs. **As a result, each program would receive less funding.**

The ability of our early childhood programs to provide exemplary service for our enrolled children with significant needs is in large part because of our highly skilled and educated workforce of teachers and support staff who dedicate themselves to the children and families we serve. Unfortunately, because of being a historically underpaid field, Kennedy Krieger, like fellow childcare programs, has struggled to retain and hire highly qualified staff. **Currently, we have an early childhood provider vacancy of 18%. If our programs were fully staffed, we would be able to support an additional 50 children.**

We are confident that increased funding will support the early childhood workforce, enhance service delivery models for our children, and result in a significant return on investment. As research has shown, effective early care and education makes a difference and yields a significant return on investment; with the Bipartisan Policy Center citing as much as \$13 for every dollar invested.¹

Renewing and expanding the Therapeutic Child Care fund to allow the full implementation of staffing and practices proven to benefit children is not simply good for children, but society at large. The availability of research-based therapeutic early learning enables parents to work; helping to address Maryland's higher-than-the-national-average reduction in prime-aged women in the workforce. But more than that, it gives these families peace of mind as their children thrive. Early learning and preschool have a considerable impact on the health and well-being of families. High-quality programs generate long-term impacts to prevent or reverse the damaging effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), improve access to nutrition, and enhance a child's cognitive and physical development.

Lack of access to inclusive early learning is one of the most cited reasons for family stress, and disruptions in provision of care reduce the efficacy of critical early intervention afforded during these formative years. At the same time, research has shown long-lasting benefits for children with and without developmental differences to learn, grow, and play side-by-side. That is why Kennedy Krieger has made a firm commitment to including more typically developing peers within our early childhood programs. This is yet another reason it is critical for the Therapeutic Child Care funds to not simply adjust for inflation and increased implementation sites, but to allow innovative practices like what we are doing as Maryland's first inclusive, integrated services early care and education demonstration hub.

We deeply appreciate the efforts of the Committee to engage in identifying and implementing needed solutions.

Respectfully,



Bradley L. Schlaggar, MD, PhD
President and CEO

¹Smith, L.K. et al., (February, 2023). Building bipartisan support for child care toolkit: 2023 update. Bipartisan Policy Center: <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/download/?file=/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/BPC-ECI-Bipartisan-Toolkit-2023-Update-Full-Report.pdf>

MD Catholic Conference_SB 419_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: FAV



**MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE**

January 31, 2024

SB 419

Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony of favorable with amendments for Senate Bill 419. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government. We offer this testimony on behalf of the families of more than 50,000 students served by over 150 PreK-12 Catholic schools in Maryland.

Senate Bill 419 would extend funding for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program. The purpose of the Program is to provide grants to providers that specialize in providing child care and early childhood education to children under the age of 6 years who have developmental delays, physical disabilities, or delays in social, emotional, or behavioral functioning. The Conference previously supported legislation to create the Program in 2022. Therein, funding was only mandated for fiscal years 2023, 2024 and 2025. This legislation would ensure the existence of and funding for the program after fiscal year 2025.

Children are the core of the family unit and any legislation that seeks to stabilize their child care environment should be considered a priority. Stable child care is an essential component to supporting strong, economically secure families. Moreover, enabling working parents' continued access to child care services is an imperative part of combating poverty. Often, a barrier to sustainable and full-time employment is the availability and affordability of reliable child care services. The State should thus do all it can to support access to child care services for working parents.

This bill would provide specialized child care to those children who most need attention in addressing their cognitive, emotional, psychosocial and language development. Moreover, funding continuity is an important aspect in educating children with disabilities. It is for these reasons we request a favorable report on Senate Bill 419.

SB 419- Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Fun

Uploaded by: Jane Krienke

Position: FAV



Maryland
Hospital Association

January 31, 2024

To: The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

Re: Letter of Support- Senate Bill 419- Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding-
Alterations

Dear Chair Guzzone:

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) 62 member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 419.

The Maryland General Assembly passed legislation in 2022 to establish the Therapeutic Child Care Program to deliver specialized childcare and early childhood education for children with developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, or delays in social, emotional, or behavioral functioning. The bill includes an annual appropriation.

There are a limited number of therapeutic child care programs in the state. These programs specialize in caring for medically fragile children. [PACT](#), an affiliate of Kennedy Krieger Institute, for example, cares for medically fragile children younger than 5 who are experiencing homelessness. Services are provided without regard to the family's ability to pay. PACT relies on grants and donations, which is not sufficient to cover the actual cost of these services.

[The Lourie Center for Children's Social & Emotional Wellness](#), part of Adventist HealthCare, has offered a therapeutic childcare program, specialized preschool, and family-focused services for more than 35 years. The Center serves approximately 4,000 children and families. Research shows the effectiveness of interventions through the Center, which also relies on grant funding and donations.

SB 419 would ensure the stable funding needed to continue these critical services does not end in fiscal year 2025. Sometimes children with special medical needs remain in hospitals beyond what is medically necessary if a parent or guardian does not have the resources or family support to care for a child at home. Funding for therapeutic childcare programs supports the child receiving care as well as their family.

For these reasons, we request a *favorable* report on SB 419.

For more information, please contact:
Jane Krienke, Senior Legislative Analyst, Government Affairs
Jkrienke@mhaonline.org

Written Testimony SB419 final.pdf

Uploaded by: Jimmy Venza

Position: FAV



January 31, 2024

To: The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
From: The Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness
Re: SB419 – Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program

POSITION: SUPPORT

Good afternoon, Chairman and Committee Members, and thank you for the opportunity to come before you in strong support of this important Therapeutic Childcare legislation. Special thanks to Delegate Bernice Mireku-North and Senator King for their leadership and championing of some of our most vulnerable and youngest children.

I am Dr. Jimmy Venza, a clinical psychologist, and Executive Director of the Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness in Rockville. The Lourie Center is one of our nation's homes of infant and early childhood mental health care. We are part of Maryland's fabric of specialized early childhood care, along with two other nationally recognized institutions: Kennedy Krieger and the Arc.

These programs provide highly specialized early childhood care for some of our most vulnerable infants, young children, and their families. The children all face great adversity, but the challenges look different: whether it be complex developmental disabilities, like autism, physical health and complex medical needs, or children experiencing trauma and mental health challenges – all leading to safety concerns, disruptions in early learning, and require intensive families supports and specialized, multidisciplinary teams of educators, health, and mental health experts.

Therapeutic childcare programs also train the early childhood workforce, conduct research, and spread best-practice around the state and throughout the country. At the same time, these services have faced chronic underfunding and are ever at risk for budget cuts and reductions in care. Funding through this bill over the past two years has been instrumental in ensuring access and continuity of care. This early intervention is essential to help the children and families reach their full potential throughout the lifespan.

Today, I urge you for a favorable report on SB419– so that the 2024 legislative session will be remembered as the year when our State unites with our children and families to establish their specialized care, with sustained funding, in Maryland law.

Thank you and great gratitude to one and all for your service on behalf of our children, families, and community.



2024 MOTA SB 419 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Paddy

Position: FAV



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

PO Box 36401, Towson, Maryland 21286 ♦ mota-members.com

Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation

Bill Number: Senate Bill 419

Title: Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program – Funding -Alteration

Hearing Date: January 31, 2024

Position: Support

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports Senate Bill 419 – *Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program – Funding Alterations*. The bill makes the annual funding level of \$3.7 million into a permanent requirement. Under current statute, the Governor is only required to fund the program through fiscal 2025.

Occupational therapy practitioners are committed to early interventions for young children whose daily functioning is affected by developmental delays, physical disabilities, or behavioral health challenges. The Therapeutic Child Care Program supports partnerships between child care centers and health programs to provide effective early interventions for children. These partnerships are critical to supporting families seeking to ensure their children can integrate into educational, family, and social settings.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net.

SB419 King Sponsor Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Nancy King

Position: FAV

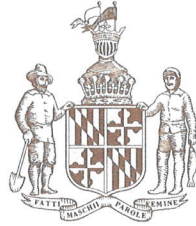
NANCY J. KING
Legislative District 39
Montgomery County

MAJORITY LEADER

Budget and Taxation Committee

Chair

Education, Business and
Administration Subcommittee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR STATEMENT

Senate Bill 419 – Therapeutic Child Care Program – Funding - Alterations

January 31, 2024

Mister Chairman and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

Therapeutic Child Care Programs are licensed, integrated mental health and education programs for families with high-risk children from birth to five. These children show significant delays in social and emotional development. Many have experienced trauma in their life, and many have been removed from typical mainstream preschool/daycares due to safety concerns or behavioral issues.

There are several Therapeutic Child Care Programs in the State. They include:

- The Arc of Maryland
- Kennedy Krieger Institute
- Kennedy Krieger PACT – Helping Children with Special Needs
- The Lourie Center for Children’s Social and Emotional Wellness

Therapeutic Child Care Programs partner with parents/caregivers to effectively support the development of the child and the family as a whole. Therapeutic Child Care Centers can also offer specialized child care; for example, services for children who are experiencing homelessness or housing uncertainty.

Therapeutic Child Care Programs have an over 80% success rate of transitioning children to a typical kindergarten and maintaining typical education placement and social-emotional gains through 2nd grade. This success rate results in millions of dollars of savings to the state and counties by reducing long-term intensive special education expenditures.

During the 2022 legislative session, legislation was passed that defined Therapeutic Child Care Programs and set dedicated funding for those programs for two fiscal years. Senate Bill 419 will maintain that dedicated funding.

Interventions at younger ages have a huge potential to alter a child’s future developmental trajectory. The benefits from these early learning programs are substantial and need to be protected and so I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 419.

SB419_FAV_MARFY.pdf

Uploaded by: Tyahna Arnold

Position: FAV



January 31, 2024

**Senate Bill 419
Therapeutic Childcare Grant Program-Funding- Alterations
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY) is an association of private child caring organizations providing foster care, group homes, and other services through more than 200 programs across Maryland. The members of MARFY represent providers who serve Maryland's most vulnerable children who are in out of home placements due to abuse, neglect or severe mental health, and medical needs. We operate group homes, treatment foster care programs and independent living programs, primarily serving the foster care population as well as a juvenile services population.

If passed, Senate Bill 419 would address the ongoing need for funding important therapeutic childcare programs. These programs would offer grants to providers that specialize in providing childcare and early childhood education children under the age of 6, who have developmental delays, physical disabilities, or delays in social, emotional, or behavioral functioning. While there is initial cost associated with the therapeutic childcare grand programs, addressing the mental and behavioral needs of the children can lead to long-term cost savings. Early intervention can prevent more significant issues that may require costly services in the future, such as intensive mental health treatment.

Preparing Maryland for a prosperous future begins with recognizing that our youngest residents must get what they need today to become the adults who will strengthen our communities and build our economy. Fortunately, what our youth need is not a mystery. Recent advances in the science of early childhood development tell us that the early years are a time when the brain is literally building itself from the ground up, in much the way a house is constructed. And, it is the relationships and experiences children have early in life that are the building blocks for the skills they need to remain healthy, and to succeed in school, in relationships, and in the workforce.

Funding the therapeutic childcare grant program will provide the much-needed protection of vulnerable children. The therapeutic childcare grant program will also serve as an investment in their well-being, helping to break the cycle of trauma, promoting healthy development, and ultimately contributing to the creation of a more resilient and productive society. Unfortunately, antiquated funding streams require some families to surrender physical



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custody of their children to the Department of Human Services in order for the youth to access treatment in a Residential Treatment Center and other such programs.

This bill will help save the lives of children in our state and will help to keep families together. **It is for these reasons we politely ask for a favorable report on Senate Bill 419.**

For more information call or email:

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