



**Testimony Concerning HB 831**  
**“Common Ownership Communities and Zoning Authorities - Operation of**  
**Family Child Care Homes - Limitations”**  
**Submitted to the House Environment and Transportation Committee**  
**February 20, 2024**

**Position: Support**

Maryland Family Network (MFN) strongly supports HB 831, which would ensure the operation of a family child care program is considered a residential permitted activity and prohibit local jurisdictions from limiting the number of children in a program below the number authorized by the State.

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.

A family child care home is typically operated by a provider in her own residence. The provider undergoes background checks, a prescribed course of training, and safety inspections prior to being licensed. Group size cannot exceed eight children, with no more than two children under age 2. Family child care homes are regulated by Maryland State Department of Education’s Office of Child Care.

Family child care is an important community asset. Sometimes, however, restrictions in leases, Home Owners Association covenants, and local zoning laws have forced family child care providers to close or move. This is bad for the provider’s business, and it significantly limits families’ access to child care in their own neighborhoods. These restrictions are often based on misunderstandings about what family child care is.

Maryland Family Network recently published a resource [“Living with Family Child Care”](#) to help inform landlords, Home Owner Associations, and local zoning boards about the benefits of family child care.

Registered family child care is an important part of Maryland's child care delivery system. MFN respectfully urges favorable consideration of HB 831.

