



Mary's Center

Support PG Bill 504-24 and PG Bill 505-24 – Tollie B. Elliott, Sr., M.D., CEO Mary's Center

Prince George's County Delegation
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Williams,

This letter is to express Mary's Center's wholehearted support for establishing student childcare centers in PG County Schools, proposed in PG Bill 505 - Family Child Care Home Expansion Grant Program and PG Bill 504 - Student Childcare Centers.

By providing a safe and nurturing space within schools, we empower parents to pursue their professional endeavors with peace of mind, knowing that their children are in a safe and nurturing environment. The bill's focus on increasing home daycare centers will ease burdens, providing crucial support to families. This legislation encourages entrepreneurship, enhancing our local economy and fostering a spirit of self-reliance in Prince George's County. Additionally, the Family Child Care Home Expansion Grant Program will have a significant positive impact on our community. This legislation will not only benefit individual families but also strengthen our community as a whole.

Mary's Center is an established Community Health Center with a \$110 million budget that serves more than 65,000 people each year in Maryland and Washington, DC. We provide medical, dental, behavioral health and social services to all who need them, regardless of their ability to pay. We offer a sliding fee payment scale for those who qualify. Among the people who come to us for care: nearly 25% are uninsured, 45% are 18 and under, 70% are best served in a language other than English, and more than half live at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

As Chief Executive Officer at Mary's Center, I have seen the challenges parents face in finding affordable, quality daycare. Many parents scramble to pay for the fees, or they are simply unable to afford them, while others cannot find an available daycare in their close vicinity. Thus, the increased availability and accessibility of new home daycare centers would alleviate the worry of many of our parents. Moreover, this would allow many of our community members to start small businesses from their own home, where they can earn a living and build wealth. This would greatly benefit our county economically and would increase the entrepreneurial spirit of Prince Georges.

Please consider this letter as an endorsement for this legislation. I believe that these centers will create a positive change in our community.

Sincerely,

Tollie B. Elliott, Sr., M.D.
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