

Written Testimony Support March 2025 AEC.pdf

Uploaded by: Anna Curtin

Position: FAV



March 17, 2025

To: The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
From: The Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness
Re: HB 185/SB 359 Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding – Alterations

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.

My name is Dr. Anna Curtin, licensed psychologist, and director of the Therapeutic Nursery Program (TNP). I first came to The Lourie Center as a student extern in my doctoral program and was captivated by the Therapeutic Nursery Program. TNP is such as special therapeutic service, in which the clinical and educational staff are able to work with students throughout the day in building coping skills, de-escalating children, all while teaching them kindergarten readiness skills. I returned to The Lourie Center when I graduated my program at Gallaudet University and have worked there for 10 years, both doing therapy with children and families as well as acting as leadership in the TNP.

I am writing to ask for your help to ensure there is appropriate funding for the Therapeutic Child Care Program (Reference R00A02.57 in the Budget Book). The Governor's Appropriation for this grant program for FY26 is short by 2.2 million dollars; The proposed appropriation is 1.5 million instead of the 3.7 million that providers have relied on for years and which is required to sustain this important service for families across the state who have children with complex healthcare needs.

This critical program allows children to receive the early intervention services they need to stay healthy and build skills and ensures parents of medically complex children are able to continue to work, knowing their children are receiving their childcare in a safe, quality, therapeutic environment. I can share a few of the stories of how we have helped children through this program. We have a student now enrolled who was left alone in her playpen for hours a day and who barely knew how to play with others or speak. After a year in TNP she is now thriving, chatty, and reading at 1st grade level despite only being 4 years old. We have had parents tell us that they could not go out to the store for fear of their child's explosive behaviors. One mother shared a recent Parent Teacher Conference that they could now take their child to church or to Target without any worries of what might happen. Even more importantly, this mother shared she was able to stop taking her anti-depressants because she was no longer so isolated due to the challenges with her child.

Early intervention programs save the State and County money in the long term. TNP works to prevent school failure in kindergarten and reduce long term costs to the state for special education services. The majority of the TNP families earn low income and are not able to access the services offered through TNP on their own or through private placements. It is also notable that without early intervention in preschool, TNP students are 25% more



likely to drop out of high school, 40% more likely to become a teen parent, and 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime (Hau et. al. 2018). There is both a societal cost and a true financial cost to this. Untreated trauma and high ACES scores can cost up to \$88,000 per adult annual – up to \$2.4 million dollars from state and federal supports over their lifetime.

Funding through FY25 has been 3.7 million each year and is shared by 7 therapeutic childcare providers statewide. The childcare providers use their grants to hire nurses and additional healthcare workers to supplement their existing childcare staff team. With this cut in funding these programs will likely not survive. If they do survive, they will most likely have to cut therapeutic childcare services to many children with a lower funded grant; costs for healthcare professionals and supplies are only going up, and these programs do not have other funding sources to fill in the gaps this shortfall would create.

There are bills this session (HB 185/SB 359) which were intended to extend funding for this program for the future. The Senate version of the bill as passed would pick up funding in FY27, continuing to FY29 at 3.7 million per year. The House version of the bill as amended in Friday would reduce the appropriation for FY27-29 to only 1.5 million. We ask for your help to restore 2.2 Million to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program (R00A02.57) to the FY26 budget AND conform the House Bill 185 to the same language/posture as Senate Bill 359, to ensure the appropriation of 3.7 million will be in place for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program from FY27-29.

Please let me know if there is any additional information I can provide to support this critical request.

Thanks and all best wishes,



Licensed Psychologist
Director, Therapeutic Nursery Program



Children's National Testimony - HB 185 - Julia DeA

Uploaded by: Austin Morris

Position: FAV



111 Michigan Ave NW
Washington, DC 20010-2916
ChildrensNational.org

**Testimony of Julia DeAngelo
Program Manager of School Strategies
Children's National Hospital
Co-Lead for the Early Childhood Education Workgroup**

**HB 185: Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding – Alterations
Position: FAVORABLE
March 27, 2025
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in favor of House Bill 185. My name is Julia DeAngelo, 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 community health needs and develop a response to 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 HB 185, 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. According to a recent report from the Maryland Family Network, the percentage of

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>

children needing social/emotional accommodations lies between 36% to 54.9% and 46.8% of these children were identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder.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.^{3,4} Children's National feels that the funding increases proposed in HB 185 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, 28% of center-based childcare workforce left their positions between January 2023 and December 2023.⁶ 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 education, which will benefit our state's youngest residents and their families and request a favorable report on House Bill 185. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

For more information, please contact:

Austin Morris, Government Affairs Manager
almorris@childrensnational.org

² Maryland Child Care Resource Network. (2024). Trends in Child Care - 2024. In *Maryland Family Network*. <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/trends2024%20final.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.

HB 185 mscca testimony B and T march 27 2025 cp.

Uploaded by: Christina Peusch

Position: FAV



**Caring For Maryland's Most
Important Natural Resource™**

Maryland State Child Care Association

2810 Carrollton Road
Annapolis, Md. 21403
Phone: (410) 820-9196
Email: info@mscca.org
www.mscca.org

The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) is a non-profit, statewide, professional association incorporated in 1984 to promote the growth and development of child care and learning centers in Maryland. MSCCA has over 5500 members working in the field of child care/early childhood education. We believe children are our most important natural resource and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.

Testimony: HB 185

Submitted to: Budget and Taxation Committee
March 27, 2025

MSCCA strongly supports HB 185 to secure necessary, continued funding for this important program for child care.

The purpose of this program is to provide critical grants to child care providers specializing in health/medical-based programs in coordination with early education services.

Therapeutic child care is crucial for eligible children and their families because it provides a supportive environment that addresses health, developmental, behavioral, and emotional needs, promoting healthy development and well-being. Therapeutic child care can help children develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in school, both academically and socially.

The therapeutic child care support for families reduces stress and anxiety, as well as empowering parents by equipping them with knowledge and skills to support their child's health and development.

MSCCA recommends securing the funding in the budget for these programs for the children and families who desperately need support contributing to greater family stability.

MSCCA urges a favorable report.

SEIU Local 500 Testimony in Support of HB 185 (Sen

Uploaded by: Christopher Cano

Position: FAV



Testimony - HB 185, Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations
Favorable

Senate Budget & Tax Committee

March 27, 2025

Christopher C. Cano, MPA

Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairman Guzzone & Members of the Senate Budget & Tax Committee:

SEIU Local 500, as one of Maryland's largest public sector unions representing over 23,000 workers, expresses our strong support for HB Bill 185. Our union represents the support staff in Montgomery County Public Schools, Family Child Care Providers, Faculty and Staff at several Maryland colleges and universities, staff at non-profits, and many other working people across the region.

If passed, House Bill 185 would address the ongoing need for funding critical therapeutic childcare programs. These programs would provide grants to childcare providers who specialize in serving children under the age of 6 with developmental delays, physical disabilities, or challenges in social, emotional, or behavioral functioning. While there are initial costs associated with the therapeutic childcare grant programs, investing in early intervention can result in significant long-term savings by preventing more severe issues that may require expensive services in the future, such as intensive mental health care.

Preparing Maryland for a prosperous future starts with understanding that our youngest residents must receive the support they need today in order to grow into the adults who will strengthen our communities and economy. Thankfully, we already know what children need. Advances in early childhood development science show that the early years are a critical period when the brain is actively developing, much like the construction of a house. The relationships and experiences children have during this time form the foundation for the skills they need to stay healthy and succeed in school, relationships, and the workforce.

House Bill 185 will help keep families together, save children's lives, and ensure they receive the care they deserve. We urge all members of the House to support HB 185, and we thank Delegate Mireku-North for her leadership on this issue. We ask for your vote to pass and a favorable report by this committee.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Christopher C. Cano, MPA
Director of Political & Legislative Affairs
SEIU Local 500

Easterseals testimony_HB185_Budget & Taxation.pdf

Uploaded by: Dennis Alexander

Position: FAV



Testimony in Support of HB185, Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

March 27, 2025, 1:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by

Dennis C. Alexander, Director of Government Relations

Mister Chair and Members of the Committee, on behalf of Easterseals, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support HB185 to extend funding for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program through FY29.

Easterseals DC MD VA 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 a combined total of eight child development centers and Head Start programs throughout the area. Five of these programs are located in the State of Maryland.

At Easterseals we recognize that the emotional and physical health, social skills, and cognitive and linguistic capacities that emerge in the early years are all important for success in school, the workplace, and in the larger community.

The Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program is critical to organizations like Easterseals that specialize in providing child development services to children under the age of 6 years who have developmental delays, disabilities, and physical and mental health concerns. Currently, about 30% of children enrolled in Easterseals center-based programs have a special need.

Providing high-quality childcare for children with disabilities and delays requires a comprehensive approach that addresses their unique needs, promotes their development, and ensures they feel included and supported. Some key elements of Easterseals programs include:

- ongoing teacher training, including embedded training on communication development and support for children with trauma-based behavioral concerns,
- adaptations of learning environments such as calming corners in classrooms and use of equipment such as mobility aids or adaptive feeding equipment/seating,
- utilizing additional classroom staff, and
- hiring additional support staff, including a behavioral health clinician to support children and their families.

Since inclusive classrooms are a blend of children with and without special needs, we are limited in the number of spaces

we can offer to families of children who need support, especially in our classrooms for 3- to 4-year-olds, in which we experience the highest demand. Due to the high number of families in need, our centers are often overwhelmed with more requests than we can fill. Due to this need, the continued support from programs like the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program is absolutely essential.

As one parent told us, “It was important for us that [our son] be able to take part in a larger community of kids...It gets back to those questions we had after the diagnosis: Would he ever go to school? Would he have friends? He is 2½ and he’s done both...[Easterseals] has given us this gift of giving our child a fulfilling, happy life.”

In summary, Easterseals continues to support many communities in Maryland by providing high quality, inclusive early childcare and education that supports children with developmental, behavioral, and medical needs. With 90% of brain development occurring in the first five years of life, a solid foundation in the early years increases the probability of positive outcomes in school and beyond. The Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program plays a critical role in helping us serve some of our most fragile children and I encourage you to support the original language in the bill that includes funding for this program through FY29 with an annual appropriation of \$3.7 million.

MD Catholic Conference_HB 185_FAV SENATE CROSS.pdf

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: FAV



March 27, 2025

HB185

Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding – Alterations

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of House Bill 185. 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.

House Bill 185 would extend funding for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program, from FY2027 through FY2029. 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 through FY2025. This legislation would ensure the existence of and funding for the program for three more fiscal years.

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 House Bill 185.

Crossover Testimony_HB 185-Therapeutic Child Care

Uploaded by: Jane Krienke

Position: FAV



Maryland
Hospital Association

House Bill 185- Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations

Position: *Support*

March 27, 2025

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

MHA Position

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's (MHA) member hospitals and health systems, we appreciate the opportunity to comment in support of House Bill 185.

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 childcare programs in the state. These programs specialize in caring for medically fragile children. The [Early Childhood Education and Development Center](#), an affiliate of Kennedy Krieger Institute, for example, cares for medically fragile children younger than 5. Services are provided without regard to the family's ability to pay. The Center relies on grants and donations, which are not sufficient to cover the actual cost of these services.

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

House Bill 185 would ensure stable funding to continue these critical services. 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 them 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 HB 185.

For more information, please contact:

Jane Krienke, Director, Government Affairs & Policy

Jkrienke@mhaonline.org

Written Testimony SB0378 - Finaljv signed.pdf

Uploaded by: Jimmy Venza

Position: FAV



March 17, 2025

To: The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
From: The Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness
Re: HB 185/SB 359 Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations

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, licensed psychologist, and Executive Director of the Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness in Rockville. The Lourie Center has been my work home for more than twenty years and the Center is one of our nation's homes for infant and early childhood mental health care. We are also part of Maryland's fabric of specialized early childhood care, along with two other nationally recognized institutions: Kennedy Krieger and the Arc.

I am writing to ask for your help to ensure there is appropriate funding for the Therapeutic Child Care Program (Reference R00A02.57 in the Budget Book). The Governor's Appropriation for this grant program for FY26 is short by 2.2 million dollars; The proposed appropriation is 1.5 million instead of the 3.7 million that providers have relied on for years and which is required to sustain this important service for families across the state who have children with complex healthcare needs.

This critical program allows children to receive the early intervention services they need to stay healthy and build skills, and ensures parents of medically complex children are able to continue to work, knowing their children are receiving their childcare in a safe, quality, therapeutic environment.

Funding through FY25 has been 3.7 million each year and is shared by 7 therapeutic childcare providers statewide. The childcare providers use their grants to hire nurses and additional healthcare workers to supplement their existing childcare staff team. With this cut in funding these programs will likely not survive. If they do survive, they will most likely have to cut therapeutic childcare services to many children with a lower funded grant; costs for healthcare professionals and supplies are only going up, and these programs do not have other funding sources to fill in the gaps this shortfall would create.

These programs have been around for decades and make a difference in the lives of children and their families for providing early therapeutic intervention, which we know is an investment to reduce future needs and costs.

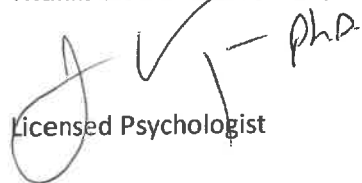


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We ask for your help to restore 2.2 Million to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program (R00A02.57) to the FY26 budget AND conform the House Bill 185 to the same language/posture as Senate Bill 359, to ensure the appropriation of 3.7 million will be in place for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program from FY27-29.

Please let me know if there is any additional information I can provide to support this critical request.

Thanks and all best wishes,

 PhD
Licensed Psychologist
Executive Director



Written Testimony SB0378 - Finalpdf.pdf

Uploaded by: Jimmy Venza

Position: FAV



March 17, 2025

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Please let me know if there is any additional information I can provide to support this critical request.

Thanks and all best wishes,

Jimmy Venza, Ph.D.

Licensed Psychologist

Executive Director



HB185-SB359 Written Testimony of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Kesso Diallo

Position: FAV



March 17, 2025

To: The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
From: The Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness
Re: HB185/SB359 Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations

POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear APP Chair Delegate Ben Barnes and B & T Chair Senator Guzzone,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the Therapeutic Childcare legislation under consideration, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this critical conversation. I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Delegate Bernice Mireku-North and Senator King for their dedication and leadership in advocating for the needs of our most vulnerable and youngest children.

As the Vice President of Special Education and Early Childhood Programs at Adventist HealthCare, I bring over 15 years of experience as an educator and education administrator, specializing in serving vulnerable populations, including those in special education and low-income communities. While Adventist HealthCare is widely recognized as a premier medical center, we are deeply proud of our unwavering commitment to addressing the social and emotional needs of children and families through the efforts of the Lourie Center and its Therapeutic Nursery Program.

Our Therapeutic Nursery Program stands as a testament to our dedication to early intervention and support for children. This program not only serves as a crucial investment in our community but also proves to be a cost-effective measure overall. By providing a structured and nurturing environment, our Therapeutic Nursery Program equips preschoolers with the tools to regulate impulses, foster positive relationships, express emotions healthily, boost self-esteem, and cultivate a love for learning.

Research has demonstrated that such early interventions not only enhance the well-being of children and families but also significantly reduce the likelihood of future incarceration, poor health outcomes, and other challenges. By supporting initiatives like the Therapeutic Childcare legislation, we are not only investing in the present well-being of our children but also in a brighter and more prosperous future for our society.

I implore you to consider the profound impact that the proposed \$2.2 million cut to this legislation will have on the lives of countless children and families in our community. The suggested



allocation stands at 1.5 million, a notable reduction from the long-standing 3.7 million that providers have depended on. This funding is essential to uphold crucial services for families statewide with children facing intricate healthcare needs. A substantial reduction in funding puts the continuity of these services at risk and will undoubtedly decrease the number of children who benefit from them. These early intervention programs have proven impact that reduce future needs and costs. By advocating for sustained funding and support for specialized care programs like the Therapeutic Childcare initiative, we are taking a vital step towards ending intergenerational adversity and ensuring that every child can reach their full potential.

During this session, there are bills (HB 185/SB 359) aimed at prolonging funding for this program in the future. The Senate's approved version of the bill would secure funding from FY27 to FY29 at 3.7 million annually. However, the House's revised version of the bill from Friday would decrease the allocation for FY27-29 to just 1.5 million.

We ask for your help to restore 2.2 Million to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program (R00A02.57) to the FY26 budget AND conform the House Bill 185 to the same language/posture as Senate Bill 359, to ensure the appropriation of 3.7 million will be in place for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program from FY27-29.

Please let me know if there is any additional information I can provide to support this critical request.

With sincere gratitude,

A. Kesso Diallo

Vice President, Special Education and Early Childhood Programs
Adventist HealthCare
The Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness
kdiallo@adventisthealthcare.com



HB185-SB359 Written Testimony of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Kesso Diallo

Position: FAV



March 25, 2025

To: The Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
From: The Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness
Re: HB185/SB359 Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations

POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear B & T Chair Senator Guzzone and Vice Chair Jim Rosapepe,

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I implore you to consider the profound impact that the proposed \$2.2 million cut to this legislation will have on the lives of countless children and families in our community. The suggested



allocation stands at 1.5 million, a notable reduction from the long-standing 3.7 million that providers have depended on. This funding is essential to uphold crucial services for families statewide with children facing intricate healthcare needs. A substantial reduction in funding puts the continuity of these services at risk and will undoubtedly decrease the number of children who benefit from them. These early intervention programs have proven impact that reduce future needs and costs. By advocating for sustained funding and support for specialized care programs like the Therapeutic Childcare initiative, we are taking a vital step towards ending intergenerational adversity and ensuring that every child can reach their full potential.

During this session, there are bills (HB 185/SB 359) aimed at prolonging funding for this program in the future. The Senate's approved version of the bill would secure funding from FY27 to FY29 at 3.7 million annually. However, the House's revised version of the bill from Friday would decrease the allocation for FY27-29 to just 1.5 million.

We ask for your help to restore 2.2 Million to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program (R00A02.57) to the FY26 budget AND conform the House Bill 185 to the same language/posture as Senate Bill 359, to ensure the appropriation of 3.7 million will be in place for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program from FY27-29.

Please let me know if there is any additional information I can provide to support this critical request.

With sincere gratitude,

A. Kesso Diallo

Vice President, Special Education and Early Childhood Programs
Adventist HealthCare
The Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness
kdiallo@adventisthealthcare.com



2025 MOTA HB 185 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 Committee
Bill Number:	House Bill 185
Title:	Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program – Funding -Alteration
Hearing Date:	March 27, 2025
Position:	Support

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports *House Bill 185 – Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program – Funding Alterations*. The bill adds funding of \$1.5 million for fiscal years 2027 through 2029.

Occupational therapy practitioners are committed to early intervention 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 intervention 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 Michael Paddy at mpaddy@policypartners.net.

HB185_BT_MARFY_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Therese Hessler

Position: FAV



March 27, 2025

House Bill 185 - Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations

Senate Budget & 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 adoptive and foster care population as well as a juvenile services population.

We are writing in support of House Bill 185 - Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations. These funds enable parents to access high-quality, specialized childcare that offers structured, stable, and nurturing environments tailored to the unique needs of these children. By reducing caregiver stress and preventing burnout, these grants help maintain stable placements and foster strong bonds, both critical for the emotional healing and development of children. Additionally, quality therapeutic childcare enhances long-term outcomes by supporting children's social, emotional, and academic growth, ultimately reducing the likelihood of future systemic involvement and associated costs. House Bill 185 aims to ensure these critical support programs can continue.

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1500 Union Avenue, Suite 2500, Baltimore, MD 21211
410-727-6367 | www.marylandnonprofits.org



The Importance of Childcare Grants

Childcare grants ensure that parents can:

1. **Access Specialized Care:** Children often require caregivers with specific training to address trauma, emotional dysregulation, and other complex needs. Childcare providers who receive appropriate funding can offer this specialized support.
2. **Provide Stability for the Child:** Consistent and high-quality childcare provides a structured and predictable environment, which is essential for children recovering from instability and trauma.
3. **Support Parents:** Parents are often working professionals or caregivers with multiple responsibilities. Without access to childcare grants, many may struggle to balance their employment, family responsibilities, and the intensive needs of the children in their care. This can lead to caregiver burnout and placement disruptions, which are detrimental to the well-being of the child.
4. **Enhance Long-Term Outcomes:** Research consistently shows that children who receive quality early care and education are more likely to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. For children in therapeutic care, these positive outcomes are particularly crucial, as they work to overcome the challenges of their early experiences.

The Economic and Social Impact

Maintaining funding for these childcare grants is not just a compassionate choice but also a fiscally responsible one. Children who receive the proper care and support are more likely to transition successfully to adulthood, reducing the long-term costs associated with mental health services, juvenile justice involvement, and unemployment. These grants represent an investment in the future of our children and our communities.

On behalf of the children and families who rely on these services, we ask that you prioritize and protect this critical funding. Together, we can help these children heal, grow, and thrive.

For more information call or email:

Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | therese@ashlargr.com



HB185.The Arc Maryland SWA. Crossover.pdf

Uploaded by: Ande Kolp

Position: FWA



SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE

HB185: Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program – Funding – Alterations

March 19, 2025

Position: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

The Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program is vitally important to 250 children with significant medical and healthcare needs in Maryland and their parents. The program consists of 7 providers of this service throughout the state of Maryland. Without these childcare services, more than 300 parents would not be able to continue to work and provide for their families. Unfortunately, **The Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program funding short in the FY26 proposed budget by 2.2 million**. The program had been level-funded for several years at 3.7 million and was expected to be funded at this level for FY26.

The Arc Montgomery County and The Arc Prince George's County both provide therapeutic child care through this important program. If the funding is not restored, it will hurt our programs and make them unsustainable to support children and their parents.

We request an amendment to align the house bill with the Senate Bill (359) AND request the dates of the program also be amended to reflect the intention of a funding appropriation in FY26 at 3.7 million:

On page 2, lines 26–28, change the start year from 2027 to 2026, and amend appropriation to \$3,700,000:

Line 26 EACH OF FISCAL YEARS ~~2027~~ **2026** THROUGH 2029, the Governor shall include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of ~~1,500,000~~ **\$3,700,000** to the Program.

Background: This long-standing program has been around for many years but was sunset in FY25. The intention of HB185/SB359 was to continue this important therapeutic child care service for children with specific healthcare needs.

The program will not survive this severe cut in FY26. Most of the programs' expenses rely on numbers of children served and a balance with professional nursing caregiver time.

The programs cannot, for example, hire one half of a nurse when a nurse must be present for every hour a child, with a complex medical need, is present in the program.

The costs are constant and a cut to funding would significantly impact the sustainability of the program. We ask for the committee's Favorable Report on HB185 with amendments, to ensure the viability of the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program and for continuity of critical services for the youth and families served through TCC.

For more information, please contact:

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

HB185 Testimony – Emma Fredieu.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Leacock

Position: FWA

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

I am writing you to ask that you amend HB185 to conform with Senate Bill 359 through as it was amended in this committee.

When my daughter Violet was born, she weighed less than 4 lbs and began an uphill battle to gain weight and eat. Ultimately at three months old she required a feeding tube to get the calories and nutrition needed for healthy development. Since my husband and I must both work full time, I was deeply concerned about how we would find appropriate and affordable childcare for a young infant with complex medical needs. It is challenging to find nannies knowledgeable and comfortable with the realities of tube feeding and most centers we spoke with were not quite confident they could provide the support we needed. KFICCC, through their excellent nursing staff, instantly put our concerns at ease and offered a safe place for Violet to grow. They were quite literally the only center equipped to care for Violet and the support they offer, with funds from the Therapeutic Childcare Grant Program, allowed my family the stability we desperately needed. Violet, still with her feeding tube, is a vibrant and healthy toddler today because of the nursing resources KFICCC provides.

The Therapeutic Childcare Grant Program has been in place throughout the state, with 7 regional providers as grant recipients serving 250 children with specialized healthcare needs. The program allows parents to work, knowing that their children are receiving the nursing and early intervention services they need to stay healthy and build skills.

The grant program has been level funded at 3.7 million per year for many years. We were surprised to see the FY26 draft budget cut this appropriation to 1.5 million. We are working to try to get the additional 2.2 million needed restored through our budget committees or a Supplemental Budget.

We ask for your help to restore 2.2 Million to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program (R00A02.57) to the FY26 budget AND conform the House Bill 185 to the same language/posture as Senate Bill 359, to ensure the appropriation of 3.7 million will be in place for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program from FY27-29.

Best,
Emma Fredieu
KFICCC parent

HBO185 - Scott & Green.pdf

Uploaded by: Chris Leacock

Position: FWA

March 24, 2025

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

I am writing you to ask that you amend HB185 to conform with Senate Bill 359 through as it was amended in this committee.

Our child attends The Arc in Montgomery County and we're absolutely thrilled with the center and staff. We have struggled with his ability to reach key developmental milestones and it's been so helpful knowing that he'd have access to these services if needed. Our child's friends receive these services, and I urge you to continue and sustain the funding levels for The Therapeutic Childcare Grant Program.

Please restore 2.2 million to the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program (R00A02.57) to the FY26 budget AND conform the House Bill 185 to the same language/posture as Senate Bill 359, to ensure the appropriation of 3.7 million will be in place for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program from FY27-29.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Scott & Nathanael Green
Silver Spring, MD 20902
414-426-2325