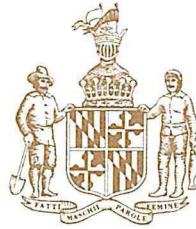


BEN BARNES
Legislative District 21
Prince George's and
Anne Arundel Counties

—
Chair
Appropriations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 25, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony of HB 477 - State Department of Education - Family Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers - Regulatory Analysis

Dear Chair Feldman:

House Bill 477 - Family Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers - Adult to Child Ratios - Alterations would increase the number of children under the age of two allowed in family childcare homes and large family childcare homes, from four to five. HB 477 would also adjust the adult to child ratio in these childcare homes, putting less restrictions on staffing requirements. Additionally, HB 477 would ensure that the requirements for child ratio and limit on the number of children under the age of two for large family childcare homes, cannot exceed that of family childcare homes.

Currently, Maryland's child ratio is one adult for every two children under the age of two. This is one of the most restrictive child ratio requirements in the country and is well below not only national standards, but also that of our neighbors. The National Association for the Education of Young Children suggests a 1:4 ratio for infants and a 1:6 ratio for older toddlers. Virginia, Pennsylvania, and DC all boost 1:4 ratios for young infants.

Maryland's restrictive child ratio requirements reduce the capacity of family childcare homes, limiting options for parents and creating a childcare shortage around the state. HB 477, in adjusting child ratios to align with national and neighboring standards, would reduce costs for parents and increase childcare capacity in Maryland

We must do everything we can to support our childcare system, and by supporting HB 477, we can give parents more options at a lower cost. I ask for a favorable report on HB 477.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Barnes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being a large, stylized capital letter.

Delegate Ben Barnes
Chair of the House Appropriations Committee