

SENATE BILL 912

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8lr3349

By: **Senators Dyson and DeGrange**

Introduced and read first time: February 20, 2008

Assigned to: Rules

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Early Childhood Education – Children in Military Families**

3 FOR the purpose of altering certain definitions to provide that certain children whose
4 families meet certain eligibility requirements are eligible for certain publicly
5 funded prekindergarten programs; and generally relating to eligibility
6 requirements for publicly funded prekindergarten programs.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
8 Article – Education
9 Section 7–101.1
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2006 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
13 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Education**
15 7–101.1.

16 (a) (1) In this section the following terms have the meanings indicated.

17 (2) “Economically disadvantaged background” means a family whose
18 income would make a child eligible for free or reduced price meals if the child were in
19 kindergarten.

20 (3) (I) “Eligible child” means a child:

21 [(i)] 1. Who is from an economically disadvantaged
22 background;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 [(ii)] **2.** Whose parent or guardian seeks to enroll the child in
2 a public prekindergarten program; and

3 [(iii)] **3.** Who is 4 years old on September 1 of the school year
4 in which the parent or legal guardian seeks to enroll the child in a public
5 prekindergarten program.

6 (II) **“ELIGIBLE CHILD” INCLUDES:**

7 **1. THE CHILD OF AN ACTIVE DUTY MEMBER OF THE**
8 **ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES, INCLUDING THE STATE MILITARY**
9 **FORCES OR A RESERVE COMPONENT OF THE ARMED FORCES, WHO IS ORDERED**
10 **TO ACTIVE DUTY BY PROPER AUTHORITY; OR**

11 **2. THE CHILD OF A MEMBER OF THE ARMED FORCES**
12 **OF THE UNITED STATES, INCLUDING THE STATE MILITARY FORCES OR A**
13 **RESERVE COMPONENT OF THE ARMED FORCES, WHO WAS INJURED OR KILLED**
14 **WHILE SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY.**

15 (4) “Eligible for free or reduced price meals” means eligible for free or
16 reduced price meals based on eligibility requirements established by the United States
17 Department of Agriculture.

18 (b) By the 2007–2008 school year, all eligible children shall be admitted free
19 of charge to publicly funded prekindergarten programs established by each of the
20 county boards.

21 (c) The requirements set forth in § 7–101(b) of this subtitle regarding the
22 domicile of a child and the residency of the child’s parent or guardian shall apply to
23 prekindergarten programs established by county boards as required by this section.

24 **(D) A CHILD WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR ADMISSION FREE OF CHARGE TO**
25 **PUBLICLY FUNDED PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED BY EACH**
26 **COUNTY BOARD UNDER SUBSECTION (A)(3)(II) OF THIS SECTION SHALL REMAIN**
27 **ELIGIBLE FOR ENROLLMENT IF THE CHILD’S PARENT LEAVES THE ARMED**
28 **FORCES OR IS NO LONGER ON ACTIVE DUTY AFTER THE CHILD COMMENCES TO**
29 **ATTEND A PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM.**

30 [(d)] **(E)** In the comprehensive master plan that is submitted under § 5–401
31 of this article, a county board shall identify the strategies that will be used in that
32 county to ensure that publicly funded prekindergarten programs are available to all
33 eligible children in that county by the 2007–2008 school year.

34 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
35 July 1, 2008.