



Testimony Concerning HB 396
“Child Care Centers - Early Childhood Screening for
Developmental Disabilities”
Submitted to the House Ways & Means Committee
February 19, 2020

Position: Favorable with Amendments

Maryland Family Network (MFN) has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and other supports for children and families in Maryland. As the largest and oldest statewide child advocacy organization in Maryland, MFN is strongly committed to ensuring the health and well-being of children across our state.

MFN has long recognized the importance of early identification of developmental delays, and therefore supports the intent of HB 396 “Child Care Centers - Early Childhood Screening for Developmental Disabilities,” which would promote early childhood developmental screenings for children under age three. However, there are ongoing questions and concerns about the bill as drafted, especially with regard to resources, screener qualifications, and implementation.

Given these considerations, MFN respectfully urges that the bill be amended to require modification of the existing MSDE—Office of Child Care Health Inventory so that it includes developmental screening as part of an overall assessment. Following current practice, that inventory would be executed and signed by a health professional and then maintained in the records of the child’s regulated child care providers. In this, we support the amendment proposed by the Maryland State Child Care Association.

MFN asks for your favorable consideration of HB 396 if amended as discussed above.