



**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](mailto:info@mscca.org)  
[www.mscca.org](http://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 4500 members working in the field of early childhood. We believe children are our most important natural resources and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.*

March 31, 2021  
Position: Oppose  
HB 931  
Judiciary

MSCCA recognizes and appreciates the efforts of Delegate Arikan to champion important issues, especially child abuse and neglect. MSCCA represents over 4800 child care/early childhood professionals working in the licensed, regulated child care across Maryland who are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. We all agree children's safety and well being is our most important priority.

MSCCA opposes HB 931 as there are effective processes in place to investigate alleged child abuse with child protective services, law enforcement and MSDE participating in protocols to investigate any and all child abuse or neglect complaints. This proposed legislation requires written or in person notification within 24 hours to all of the children's families in their program of alleged abuse or neglect along with local child advocacy center and local resources for mental health. No formal investigation by experts can be done in 24 hours!

The professional agencies involved in the investigation of suspected or alleged child abuse or neglect should take the lead and instruct the child care program/provider as to what is necessary to be required based on allegations or suspicions. To alert all families without a formal and thorough investigation by professionals in the field and confirmation of guilt based on facts is not due process. If the bill required suspension of the person accused until investigation is complete, MSCCA would support in full. If the bill required all families to be notified after investigation is complete and abuse or neglect is corroborated and confirmed, MSCCA would support.

All working in licensed, regulated child care must have extensive state, federal criminal background checks and Maryland also requires the child protective services background checks before anyone can step foot in a child care center or open a family child care.

In our country people are presumed innocent until proven guilty. To alarm all families predicated on a suspected allegation is not due process and could possibly cause much unnecessary anxiety for the families, unnecessary anxiety and probing of very young children not implicated in the allegations and basically turning an allegation into presumed guilt without allowing the experts to do their job. HB 931 has the potential to put child care and preschools out of business before even completing due process or formally investigating the nature of the complaint because when all parents are notified in 24 hours, even if the accused is innocent, most will pull their children out of the licensed program and in the world of social media, the person and program will be forever clouded by suspicion, even if innocent.

MSCCA is unaware of data in Maryland that would require this type of mandate.

MSCCA opposes HB 931 and asks committee to vote against this critical mandate.