

montgomery moving forward

mobilizing leaders to solve our biggest problems together
nonprofits / business / philanthropy / government / education / community

February 1, 2021

Esteemed Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF), a collective impact initiative of Nonprofit Montgomery, is committed to advancing equitable, accessible systems change in the early care and education (ECE) sector in Montgomery County.

MMF supports HB 608, the Child Care Provider Support Act, which would establish a grant program to provide funds to support the development and expansion of child care programs, and **we support language that extends this grant program to family child care providers as well as center based providers.**

Without this type of support, many child care programs will close, many child care employees will lose their jobs, other employees may have to leave the workforce due to lack of child care, and many children will not receive the quality early learning that they need to succeed in school and beyond.

ECE is an essential component of Maryland's economy and is vital to a thriving and equitable community. It enables working parents to get to work, be it virtually or at home, and be productive knowing their children are supported, learning, and safe. ECE enables employers to attract and retain qualified staff.

However, without sustained help, more ECE providers will close their doors or be forced to raise tuition and fees. According to a recent study by the Maryland Family Network, 67% of child care business owners have experienced a loss in revenue due to closures and mandated reduced attendance, with 60% of them reporting that they will need financial support to survive. As a result, more families will have to choose between their children and their jobs. In Montgomery County, where residents must make at least \$90,000 to make ends meet, families can ill afford to dedicate more of their income to ECE. As more families are faced with leaving the workforce, employers will lack the talent to fuel our rebound. Our families, our children, our economies, and our communities will suffer.

ECE is an economic and social justice imperative and a pillar of Maryland's economy that demands our utmost and immediate investment. **We urge you to give HB608 a favorable report.**

Respectfully and sincerely,

Montgomery Moving Forward Co-Chairs

Kevin Beverly, Economic Development Advocate

Susan Madden, Chief Government Relations Officer, Montgomery College

Kathy Stevens, Executive Director, Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy