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Legislative District 45
Baltimore City

Ways and Means Committee
Education Subcommittee

House Chair
Baltimore City Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB1307- Education – Child Care Centers and Youth Development Organizations and Programs
(Support Youth Development for School–Age Children Act)
Hearing: 3/03 at 1:30 p.m., Ways and Means Committee**

Chairman Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington, and members of the Ways and Means committee,

HB1307 will bring necessary changes to our child care licensing requirements. By creating a clear exemption AND registration category, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will have more information and authority over these programs than they currently do. The exemption is clear it applies only to youth organizations with significant experience running these programs with rigorous health, safety, and education requirements and youth organizations with direct, local government oversight. The organizations qualifying for exemption must have:

- existing requirements to ensure the safety of the children they care for, including annual background checks for all employees, board members and volunteers;
- established safety policies; compliance with mandated reporting statutes and regulations as well as applicable federal, state and local laws;
- And maintain proper staffing to youth ratios and ensure the health and safety of youth and staff.

Current child care licensing requirements are focused on early childhood safety and training, many of which do not apply to programming for school age children. The child care licensing process includes unnecessary training expenses for 0-5 early childhood training (general care, supporting breastfed infants, etc.). MSDE wants two years of hiring approval for existing programs – some of which have been in operation for 50 years.

- Staff to student ratio minimums don't reflect different types of programming - particularly for recreational/athletic programming with older students.
- Physical plant requirements suited to toddlers and young children, not growing youth and teens.
- Programs that serve a mix of age group children would have to create different programs and keep separate students over the age of 13 which is often not possible or practical.

In addition to the aforementioned, HB1307 requires youth development organizations and programs to maintain liability insurance and certain criminal background check records, which would be required to be completed at regular intervals as determined by certain entities.

I urge you to vote favorably on HB1307.

Sincerely,

Delegate Stephanie M. Smith