

**MMF-Written Testimony-For HB 944.docx (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Adjei, Karen

Position: FAV

# montgomery moving forward

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

February 22, 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. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, MMF convened over 50 labor, business, education, philanthropic, and nonprofit leaders in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. This diverse cross-sector Early Care and Education Workforce Advocacy Coalition understands that a diverse, resilient early care and education workforce is necessary for our state's economic recovery.

**MMF supports HB 944, the *Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program***, which aims to identify best practices from a 2-year pilot program that will increase the number of family child care providers and decrease the time it takes for them to become licensed.

This pilot project comes at a time when many family child care providers have been forced to close or are operating at increased costs while serving fewer children due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This pilot effort will yield important findings to inform necessary strategies aimed at increasing the availability of family child care in rural, urban, and suburban settings which is critical to addressing access, equity, and affordability gaps in this sector.

According to a May 2020 Maryland Family Network survey of early care and education providers, 51% of respondents said they might close if children are kept home as a result of the pandemic. Most child care programs operate on razor thin profit margins, which leaves them particularly vulnerable when an economic downturn hits. According to an interactive calculator, "child care providers are facing, on average, a 47 percent increase in operating costs during the pandemic, with even higher increases for programs serving three- and four-year-olds." In Maryland, providers are facing an average of 53 percent increase in costs.<sup>1</sup> Family child care programs, the primary providers serving essential personnel during the height of the pandemic, remain unable to meet their financial obligations and require assistance to remain operational.

HB944 will invest in expanding sustainable early care and education career pathways for providers, and inform what is needed to strengthen the infrastructure of family child care to ensure the sector's resilience during challenging times. Moreover, this bill's investment in the ECE sector will demonstrate commitment to building a more equitable sector that is led by women and women of color who are on the frontlines of supporting the workforce of today and nurturing the workforce of tomorrow.

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<sup>1</sup> Center for American Progress, September 3, 2020  
<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2020/09/03/489900/true-cost-providing-safe-child-care-coronavirus-pandemic/>

ECE is an economic and social justice imperative and a pillar of Maryland's economy. **We urge you to give HB944 a favorable report.**

Respectfully and sincerely,

Montgomery Moving Forward Co-Chairs and Members of the Early Care and Education Workforce  
Advocacy Coalition

**Lindsey Allard Agnamba**, CEO, School Readiness Consulting; **Laura Bardini**, Executive Director, Rockville Day Care Association, Inc.; **Kevin Beverly**, Economic Development Advocate; **Rosalba Bonilla-Acosta**, Director, CentroNia; **Bob Buchanan**, Buchanan Partners and 2030 Group; **Jody Burghardt**, Division Director, Children, Youth and Family Services, Sheppard Pratt; **Ruby Daniels**, Director, Maryland State Family Child Care Association; **Stewart Edelstein**, Education Advocate; **Sharon Friedman**, Director, Montgomery Moving Forward; **Martine Sadarangani Gordon**, Vice President of Programs, Washington Area Women's Foundation; **Michelle Green**, Executive Director, Montgomery Child Care Association; **Joanne Hurt**, Executive Director, Wonders Early Learning + Extended Day; **Christina Lopez**, President, Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEYC); **Susan Madden**, Montgomery Moving Forward, Co-Chair and Chief Government Relations Officer, Montgomery College; **Benjamin Orr**, President and CEO of the Maryland Center on Economic Policy; **Christina Peusch**, Executive Director; Maryland State Child Care Association; **Laura Weeldreyer**, Executive Director, Maryland Family Network; **Tiffany Jones**, Family Childcare Provider; **Sharon Strauss**, Executive Director, Community Action Board; **Lisette Engel**, Vice Chair, Community Action Board; **Charlene Muhammad**, Headstart Program Manager, Community Action Board

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**HB 944\_FAV\_MML.pdf**

Uploaded by: Bailey, Angelica

Position: FAV



## Maryland Municipal League

*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

# TESTIMONY

February 24, 2021

**Committee:** House Ways and Means

**Bill:** \_\_\_\_\_ HB 944 Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program - Established

**Position:** Support

**Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League supports House Bill 944, which would establish a pilot program to establish and support new child care providers in underserved communities throughout the state. This program would assist with funding and work with local governments to target and support potential new child care providers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how crucial child care is, especially for our essential workers. MML appreciates the establishment of this program, especially its focus on increasing child care in low-income areas through partnership with local governments.

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League supports House Bill 944 and respectfully requests a favorable committee report.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Scott A. Hancock	Executive Director
Angelica Bailey	Director, Government Relations
Bill Jorch	Director, Research and Policy Analysis
Justin Fiore	Manager, Government Relations

1212 West Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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**HB 944 Final Oral.pdf**

Uploaded by: DANIELS, RUBY

Position: FAV

February 19, 2021

Oral Testimony

HB 944 - Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program

House Ways and Means Committee

Good Afternoon,

- My name is Ruby Daniels, and I am the President of the Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA). I would like to thank Delegate Kaiser and this committee for this opportunity to speak in support of HB 944.
- MSFCCA represents over 4700 registered family child care providers and are an important part of the child care delivery system in Maryland.
- We are concerned that when the drastic decline of Family Child Care and Large Family Homes in Maryland. There are many reasons for this, though a significant one is the lack of financial stability for the profession.
- HB 944 would provide Grant Funding to local jurisdictions for a 2-year pilot program to help establish quality family child care and large group family child care in specific areas to provide equitable access to high-quality programs.
- Family child care is made up of predominantly women and minorities who many times are also single family households.
- HB 944 would establish family child care providers that would be better equipped to financially support their families and pursue a career in the Early Education Field.
- Maryland is a leader in early care and education policy and giving HB 944 a favorable vote will begin the process of saving an industry that is vitally important to our families and our economy.

# **HB0944- 02.24.21- Growing Family Child Care Opport**

Uploaded by: Fry, Donald

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

**HOUSE BILL 944 – GROWING FAMILY CHILD CARE OPPORTUNITIES PILOT PROGRAM –  
ESTABLISHED**

**Sponsor – Delegate Solomon**

**February 24, 2021**

**DONALD C. FRY  
PRESIDENT & CEO  
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

**Position: Support**

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports House Bill 944, which would establish the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program in the State Department of Education. The program would provide grants to local jurisdictions to establish and support pilot programs intended to increase the supply of family child care providers in areas with above average rates of poverty and unemployment or areas with a lack of available child care providers.

The GBC has been actively involved in supporting businesses as they weather the ill effects of the pandemic, restrictions placed on business operations, and the resulting negative economic impact on businesses. To address the challenges and to assist businesses to recover the Greater Baltimore Committee created the GBC COVID-19 Business Recovery Advisory Council, comprised of regional business executives, with a mission to provide assistance, develop programs, and to make policy recommendations to benefit businesses recover from the pandemic, with a particular focus on small and minority-owned businesses. One of the recommendations of the advisory council called for the GBC and its member companies to advocate for state and local governments to address the immediate shortage and to create long-term solutions pertaining to child care through targeted policy or funding initiatives.

There is an urgent need to ensure that adequate high-quality child care is available for the children of Maryland's workforce. Increasing the number of licensed child care providers is integral to the state's business ecosystem. Without affordable and dependable child care options, Maryland's workforce is challenged to perform their employment responsibilities and duties to maximum capacity and capabilities resulting in loss of production in business operations.

House Bill 944 is consistent with the Greater Baltimore Committee's *2021 Legislative Priorities*, which calls for policy, funding, and regulatory solutions to accelerate economic recovery with an emphasis on support for small and minority-owned businesses.

**For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on House Bill 944.**

*The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 66-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.*

**GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

111 South Calvert Street • Suite 1700 • Baltimore, Maryland • 21202-6180

(410) 727-2820 • [www.gbc.org](http://www.gbc.org)

**HB 944 Final Testimony 2-24-21.pdf**

Uploaded by: Hancock, Rebecca

Position: FAV



Testimony Concerning HB 944 - Growing Family Child Care  
Opportunities Pilot Program - Established  
Submitted to House Economic Matters Committee  
February 24, 2021

**Position: Support**

The Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA) is a non-profit association advocating on behalf of approximately 4700+ registered family child care providers and 140 large family child care homes in Maryland. These small businesses are a vital part of the child care delivery system in Maryland and a significant portion of the child care programs that remained open to essential personnel during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Family child care providers normally care for approximately 50% of all children in Maryland under the age of two in mixed-age group settings, where they also care for other ages (ie: toddlers, preschool and school-age children).

Over the years there has been a significant decline in existing family child care programs and an increased number have closed recently due to the pandemic. It is important to note that family child care providers are almost always women and a significant number are minorities as well. In 1996 there were 12, 500 Registered family child care providers in Maryland. As of January 2020, there were 5,091 and as of February 2021 that number dropped again to 4,345, that's a recent decrease of 14.65%. If this decline continues, there will likely be a significant shortage of family child care programs in Maryland's future.

MSFCCA is deeply concerned about this decline. Though there are multiple reasons for it, the lack of financial consistency is a significant concern to many that have left the profession. MSFCCA endorses any legislative actions that would enable new Registered Family Child Care Programs to open and begin serving families. HB 944, the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program, would provide grant funding to local jurisdictions for a 2-year pilot program to help establish quality family child care programs in urban, suburban and rural

locations. This would create programs for children in areas with above average poverty, and guarantee a more equitable access to quality child care. It would also support early education career pathways for women and minorities by allowing them to better financially support their families and in turn strengthen our economy. The success of this Pilot Program would be reported to the General Assembly beginning December 1, 2021, and each year thereafter to continue building a more sustainable workforce of caregivers.

Maryland is a leader in early care and education policy and giving HB 944 a favorable vote will begin the process of saving an industry that is vitally important to our future and families. MSFCCA appreciates the opportunity to comment on this legislation and welcomes any questions or comments. Feel free to contact Rebecca Hancock, the MSFCCA Vice President of Public Policy at 240-299-0222 (cell) or 301-934-4445 (Home) to answer any questions concerning this testimony.

**HB0944-WM\_MACo\_SUP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jabin, Drew

Position: FAV





**MARYLAND**  
*Association of*  
**COUNTIES**

## **House Bill 944**

### *Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program - Established*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Ways and Means and Appropriations  
Committees

Date: February 24, 2021

From: Drew Jabin

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 944. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact families in Maryland, access to affordable, safe child care opportunities is critically important. HB 944 would provide a fair, reasonable, and welcome framework to expand access to child care grants.

This bill would create the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program under the State Department of Education (the Department) with the purpose of awarding grants to establish and support child care programs. There are 13 child care licensing regions, designated by the Department, providing licensing and oversight for family child care programs across all Maryland counties. This bill would require the Department to partner with the Maryland Child Care Resource Network to award grants to local jurisdictions or the child care licensing regions within urban, suburban, and rural areas across the state.

Maryland county governments all have a common goal of providing for the health and wellbeing of children in their community, and this bill creates a new funding resource to encourage affordable, quality child care across all jurisdictions. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 944 and requests a **FAVORABLE** report.

# **MAP- HB 944 Growing Family Child Care Opportunitie**

Uploaded by: Jefferson , Stacey

Position: FAV



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 944

Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program- Established

House Ways and Means and Appropriations Committees  
February 24, 2021

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Julia Gross, Co-Chairs

### Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth  
Baltimore Jewish Council  
Behavioral Health System Baltimore  
CASH Campaign of Maryland  
Catholic Charities  
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland  
Family League of Baltimore  
Fuel Fund of Maryland  
Health Care for the Homeless  
Homeless Persons  
Representation Project  
Job Opportunities Task Force  
League of Women Voters of Maryland  
Loyola University Maryland  
Maryland Catholic Conference  
Maryland Center on Economic Policy  
Maryland Community Action  
Partnership  
Maryland Family Network  
Maryland Hunger Solutions  
Paul's Place  
Public Justice Center  
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore  
Welfare Advocates

### Marylanders Against Poverty

Stacey Jefferson, Co-Chair  
P: 410-637-1900 ext 8578  
C: 443-813-9231

E: [stacey.jefferson@bhsbaltimore.org](mailto:stacey.jefferson@bhsbaltimore.org)

Julia Gross, Co-Chair  
P: 410-528-0021x6029

E: [jgross@mdhungersolutions.org](mailto:jgross@mdhungersolutions.org)

**Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly supports HB 944.** This bill would establish the "Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program" to increase and sustain the supply of family child care. A family child care home is typically operated by a provider in her own residence. The provider undergoes background checks, a prescribed course of training, and safety inspections prior to being licensed. Group size cannot exceed eight children, with no more than two children under age 2. Family child care homes are regulated by MSDE's Office of Child Care.

**Expanding the supply of registered family child care providers would provide low-income working families in underserved communities more high quality early child care options.** Low-income working parents face several challenges related to work schedules (greater likelihood to have part time work, to work nontraditional hours, to have fluctuating schedules) that may make family child care more appealing. When choosing child care, parents balance decisions about location, cost, and availability with multiple work and family factors. For low income working families, choices may be constrained by limited resources.

**Research indicates characteristics of the care setting and of the caregiver, as well as the availability, accessibility, and affordability of the provider, are important to parents, and parents often made decisions based on these issues.** According to Maryland Family Network's 2021 Child Care Demographics, the average weekly cost of full-time family child care is less than care provided in a child care center.

Montgomery County's program, on which the pilot would be based, was designed to expand the supply of registered family child care providers in underserved communities and to encourage the participation of women who might face barriers to becoming registered has shown remarkable success. Program activities include outreach to marginalized communities, including those in which English is not the primary languages, mentoring, some financial incentives, and consultation on best business practices. Results have included a major reduction in the time it takes to get licensed, from up to a year down to approximately four months. Piloting this program in other jurisdictions could help expand the supply of quality child care while supporting the efforts of low-income women--many in communities of color--to establish successful small businesses.

**MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 944.**

*Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.*

# **Shiny John Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: John, Shiny

Position: FAV

## **Shiny John**

I am a regulated Family Child Care Provider located in Silver Spring. I am currently published at level 3 in Maryland's Quality Rating and Improving System, EXCELS and in the Maryland Child Care Credential I am currently at level 4. I am pursuing the National Accreditation for Family Child Care through the guidance of the RR and providing support with an accredited mentor.

Due to COVID19 I have no children enrolled in my program. However, I continue marketing my program and updating my information in LOCATE.

The Montgomery Child Care Resources and Referral Center provided me with a roadmap detailing the training requirements to obtain my registration to operate my business in childcare. The trainings were offered twice a week during the evenings at their location. I was provided Technical Support throughout this process, from reviewing the paperwork before submitting it to the Office of Child Care to the pre-visit to assist me with accommodating the learning environment.

Before the Licensing Specialist schedules a site visit, the RR had reviewed my paperwork, guided me with the fire inspections, fingerprinting, medical reports and notarizing forms. Technical assistance was provided in developing my contract and Parent Handbook including all my policies and practices.

I was provided with excellent resources from Maryland State Department of Education website, contacted the Women Business Center and had a one on one meeting to formalize my business. Furthermore, the RR through Growing Opportunities Family Child Care they paid for the first annual registration in the Montgomery County Family Child Care Association.

I am in an improvement path pursuing higher levels of education that will enable me to deliver an equative quality childcare program to all children in Montgomery County.

**HB0944-W&M-FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mehu, Natasha

Position: FAV



BRANDON M. SCOTT  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**HB  
944**

February 24, 2021

**TO:** Members of the Ways & Means Committee  
**FROM:** Natasha Mehu, Director of Government Relations  
**RE:** House Bill 944 – Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program  
**POSITION: Support**

Chair Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 944.

HB 944 establishes the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program in the Department of Education and authorizes the Department to provide grants to local jurisdictions or child care licensing regions to increase the supply and ensure the sustainability of family child care providers in areas with above average rates of poverty and unemployment.

The Mayor's Office of Children & Family Success supports the work of the Baltimore Children's Cabinet, including its dedication to improving the early childhood development of our youngest residents. Access to high quality child care will become even more scarce as the COVID pandemic has reduced the number of operating child care providers in Baltimore City. Supporting the growth of family child care providers will be critical in addressing the shortage and ensuring that all Baltimore children are well cared for and ready for kindergarten.

We respectfully request a **favorable** report on House Bill 944.

# **Child Care Growing Family Child Care Grant Program**

Uploaded by: Myers, Beth

Position: FAV





**Hearing Testimony**  
**Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program, [HB 944](#)**  
**Ways and Means Committee, February 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC**

I am writing today to speak on behalf of the Service Employees International Union, Local 500 - the collective bargaining representative of home-based child care providers who participate in the Maryland State Child Care Scholarship program to speak in support of the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program, [HB 944](#). SEIU Local 500 represents over 20,000 working people in Maryland, Washington D.C., and Virginia. Our union represents the support staff at the Montgomery County Public School system, Staff and Faculty at several colleges and universities, staff at non-profits and many other working people.

Licensed family child care (FCC) programs, are usually operated by a woman in her home caring for up to eight children. Many families start these programs as a means to take care of their own children, bring in income and provide support to families in their community. FCC constitutes a critical component of the overall supply of child care and a necessary or preferable option for many parents due to cost, geographic proximity, care provided in family groups of multiple ages and hours of availability. Additionally, children with immune disorders, many premature babies and others with concerns about large groups are ideally suited by family child care homes. In many rural parts of the state, family child care homes represent the only option for child care for many families.

Yet in Maryland and across the United States, we are seeing a drastic decline in Family Child Care. Maryland has seen Family Child Care providers go from approximately 12,500 in 1996 to 5000 in 2020. The pandemic will likely make matters worse. In addition to all of the other great work that legislators are doing to help existing providers survive and thrive, we also must support and encourage new providers to open or we will not meet the needs of Maryland's families. Even now as we talk about re-opening schools, we are hearing from support staff at schools that finding child care for their own children is a big barrier to their return.

There are too many barriers that new providers face in opening and operating a new family child care, through this program legislators can help providers navigate the system and move quickly to open safe programs in targeted areas. These pilot programs would assist providers with getting the training they need to run a safe Family Child Care home. It would also assist providers in navigating a system that can also feel like it was designed for lawyers instead of educators. Additionally, this program can assist localities in bringing together a variety of actors in the community to help create a community of support for family child care providers. As we work to re-open Maryland, all of our business, education and government entities will need to address the child care crisis and this program will give them a platform to make that happen.

**Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC**  
**12 Taft Court, Rockville, MD 20850**  
**301-740-7100 [www.seiu500.org](http://www.seiu500.org)**  
**Pia Morrison, President**



Child care is a vital part of the infrastructure for any community. We know that families, and women in particular, are struggling during COVID. Over the course of the first 10 months of the pandemic, women—particularly women of color—have lost more jobs than men. Overall, women have lost a net of 5.4 million jobs during the recession—nearly 1 million more job losses than men.<sup>i</sup> We must repair and rebuild our child care infrastructure to support these women and get them back to work. And we need to create a system that makes is a real prospect for best and brightest educators to become Family Child Care providers. SEIU Local 500 asks that you support HB 944.

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<sup>i</sup> [Diana Boesch](#) and [Shilpa Phadke](#), [When Women Lose All the Jobs: Essential Actions for a Gender-Equitable Recovery](#)

February 1, 2021, 9:02 am <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2021/02/01/495209/women-lose-jobs-essential-actions-gender-equitable-recovery/>

**Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC**  
**12 Taft Court, Rockville, MD 20850**  
**301-740-7100 [www.seiu500.org](http://www.seiu500.org)**  
**Pia Morrison, President**

**MD Catholic Conference\_HB 944\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: O'Day, Garrett

Position: FAV



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**February 22, 2021**

**HB 944**

**Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Established**

**House Ways & Means Committee**

**Position: Support**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill 944. The Conference represents the public policy interests of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, the Archdioceses of Baltimore and Washington and the Diocese of Wilmington, which together encompass over one million Marylanders.

House Bill 944 would establish a Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program in the Department of Education. Through this bill, MSDE would be afforded the ability to provide grants to local jurisdictions or child care licensing regions to increase the supply and ensure the sustainability of family child care providers in areas with higher numbers of low-income Marylanders.

These grants would provide much needed support to a promote growth of a vital and essential sector of Marylander's everyday lives. Sixteen percent of child care providers have been forced to close their doors in Maryland since early 2020, leading to less options for child care access for working families. With the passage of this bill would promote new providers to open their doors, thus providing greater access to child care options in Maryland.

Child Care is an essential component to supporting strong, economically secure families. Additionally, the Church supports this bill as a part of its priority interest in alleviating poverty in our state, as enabling working parents' continued access to child care services is an imperative part of combating poverty. Often, a barrier to sustainable and full-time employment is the availability and affordability of reliable child care services. The State should thus do all it can to support access to child care services for working parents.

The Conference appreciates your consideration, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 944.

# **HB 944 testimony Feb 24.pdf**

Uploaded by: Peusch, Christina

Position: FAV



**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)

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*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.*

February 24, 2021  
Position: Supports  
HB 944  
Ways and Means

### **MSCCA supports HB 944, the *Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program.***

We appreciate Delegate Solomon's continued efforts to support all child care in our state.

HB 944 is an innovative way to expand and institute a multi-regional approach pilot program for registered family child care providers in order address to grow a declining, in a very necessary, important sector of the child care industry. The bill identifies best practices from a 2-year pilot program that will increase the number of family child care providers and decrease the time it takes for them to become licensed. All child care, including centers, letters of compliance are declining and we hope this model will expand further to support more of the child care and early childhood education sector.

This pilot includes important focus on rural, urban and multi-lingual areas of the state to offer more opportunities for families by increasing child care opportunities. The COVID 19 pandemic has negatively impacted small businesses across the country and in Maryland, which is a primarily small business state.

HB 944 pilot project comes at a time when many child care providers have been forced to close or are operating at increased costs while serving fewer children due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This pilot effort will provide data to inform necessary steps to address issues including equity and affordability.

MSDE has stated more than 500 child care programs have closed in less than a year and more than 700 in December 2020 remained unopened. Child care slots are in decline for families who will need all types of child care choices to meet their needs. Pre COVID 19, more than 180,000 children were using licensed, registered child care services in Maryland. Due to the continued decline and projected losses of primarily women owned, operated and working in our industry, families will have less child care and possibly less affordable options in the future. Maryland has not done enough to support child care system with state dollars before and during the pandemic. Legislation such as HB 944 is a step in the right direction to help build a better infrastructure for child care.

The child care and ECE sector is an essential, critical workforce that is the backbone of our economy. HB 944 supports ways to define obstacles, determine as well as address areas of need, strengthen the child care system and expand choices for families so they can earn while children learn.

MSCCA urges a favorable report.



# **HB0944 MD NARAL SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Philip, Diana

Position: FAV





**HB0944 - Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Established**  
Presented to Hon. Anne Kaiser and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee  
February 24, 2021 1:30pm

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**POSITION: SUPPORT**

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges the House Ways and Means Committee **a favorable report on HB0944 - Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Established**, sponsored by Delegate Jared Solomon.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. As part of our efforts to protect reproductive freedom for all Marylanders, we work to ensure every childbearing individual has the right to decide if, when, and how many children to have, and to parent in good health, in safety, and with dignity. In doing so, we support measures that expand access to child care choices for families.

Just over 20% of Maryland workers have a child under the age of five,<sup>1</sup> meaning child care is not just essential to families, but to the economy as well. Families face many obstacles when attempting to secure child care for their children: cost, transportation, lack of needed hours for care, just to name a few. Child care providers also face obstacles to keep their doors open. The average annual wage for family child care providers, in particular, is only \$39,884, which is not reflective of the many business costs of operating a family child care and well below the state average income of \$67,860.<sup>23</sup> What's more, the number of family child care slots has been in decline over the past decade, with the pandemic taking a particularly harsh toll on the child care industry as a whole.

The Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program has the opportunity to focus resources on areas that are in particular need for more child care slots and create jobs and offset costs for new family child care providers. This program has a strong emphasis on sustainability which ensures family child care homes can continue to operate and families can continue to access safe, quality care. We do respectfully request that this program consider what can be done to offer more child care options to parenting students.

Families deserve choices when it comes to accessing child care for their children, and child care providers deserve respect and support for the essential and difficult work they do. The ability to parent with dignity is essential to the realization of reproductive freedom, and being able to access and choose quality and affordable child care is an integral part of providing care with dignity. For these reasons, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges a favorable committee report on HB0944**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> Counting Our Losses :The Hidden Cost to Marylanders of an Inadequate Child CareSystem, Maryland Family Network, [https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/MarylandFamilyNetwork\\_Countingourlosses\\_FullReport\\_Hyperlinked\\_Singles%20%281%29.pdf](https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/MarylandFamilyNetwork_Countingourlosses_FullReport_Hyperlinked_Singles%20%281%29.pdf). Accessed on 22 February 202.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Family Network Public Policy Handbook 2020 – 2021, Maryland Family Network, <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Public%20Policy%20Handbook%202020-21.pdf>. Accessed on 22 February 2021.

<sup>3</sup>County Employment and Wages in Maryland – Second Quarter 2020, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, [https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/news-release/countyemploymentandwages\\_maryland.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/news-release/countyemploymentandwages_maryland.htm), Accessed on 22 February 2021.

**HB 944 FAV\_ACY\_MRock.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rock, Melissa

Position: FAV



To: The Honorable Chair, Delegate Anne Kaiser, and members of the Ways and Means Committee  
 The Honorable Chair, Maggie McIntosh, and members of the Appropriations Committee

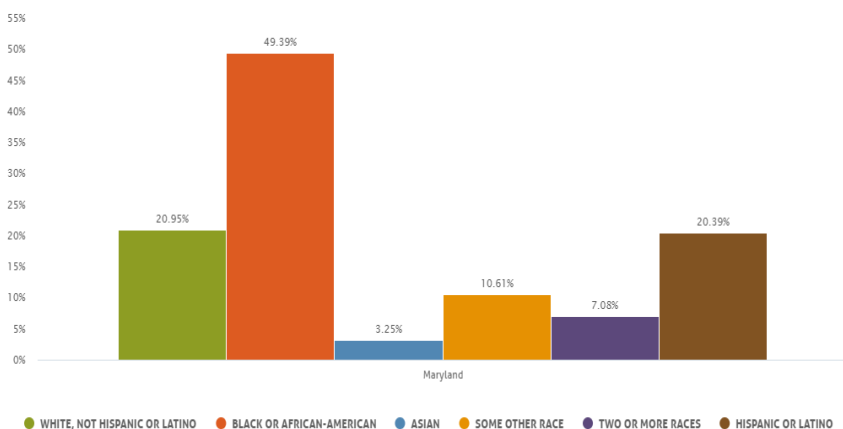
From: Melissa S. Rock, Birth to Three Strategic Initiative Director

Re.: **HB 944: Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program- Established**

Date: February 24, 2021

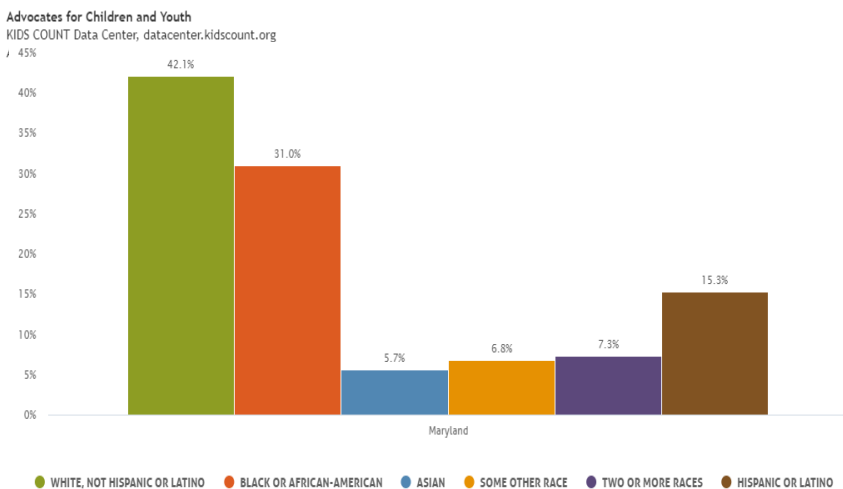
Position: **SUPPORT**

Maryland's childcare field is one of the industries that has suffered significant financial losses due



to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even before the pandemic, Maryland's childcare system faced systemic sustainability issues. Despite families spending significant portions of their income on childcare (especially for the youngest babies), childcare providers are largely low wage workers who do not even receive benefits. Most childcare providers, especially family-based or in-home providers have very thin margins between their income and their expenses. In Maryland, as of June 30, 2019, there were 6,917 licensed childcare providers (5,360 home-based childcare providers and 1,557 center-based providers).<sup>1</sup> As of May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, only 55% (or 3,778) of those childcare providers were caring for children.<sup>2</sup> Maryland Family Network (MFN) surveyed Maryland's licensed childcare providers in May 2020, and received responses from 41.6% of Maryland's providers (both family based and center based childcare providers).<sup>3</sup> Their survey indicated that "67% of childcare providers lost revenue due to COVID-19."<sup>4</sup>

Child Poverty Status By Race (Percent) - 2019



Child Population By Race/Ethnicity (Percent) - 2019

Advocates for Children and Youth  
 KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org  
 A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/2020\\_MFN\\_Demographics.pdf](https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/2020_MFN_Demographics.pdf) at p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/2020%20MFN%20Caring%20During%20Covid%20%28bg%29%201.3%20Pages%5B1%5D.pdf> at p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> Id. at p. 5.



The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) does not share any disaggregated data showing the race/ethnicity of childcare providers or the children attending licensed childcare programs. Therefore, we do not have the data to show what, if any, racial and or ethnic disparities there were in availability of childcare. However, we do know that Maryland has significant racial and ethnic disparities in rates of poverty among Maryland's children. (See tables on the first page of this testimony).<sup>5</sup> If there were no disparities by race or ethnicity, the two graphs above would look the same, but as you see Black and Latinx children are significantly over-represented among Maryland's children experiencing poverty. There is every reason to believe that many of the same systemic factors causing those racial disparities in rates of child poverty would also lead to Black and Latinx childcare providers facing the greatest economic challenges covering their expenses and staying open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. MFN's Childcare Demographics report from 2020 illustrates that family based childcare providers charge less than childcare centers (see table below).<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it is likely that the same BIPOC families with fewer resources than their White counterparts are more likely to be accessing family childcare.

### Average Weekly Cost of Full-time Child Care

Maryland		
Programs	Family Child Care Centers	Child Care
0-23 months	\$205.62	\$308.92
2-4 years	\$174.25	\$220.07
5 years <sup>1</sup>	\$159.41	\$208.96
School Age Full <sup>2</sup>	\$141.71	\$168.34
School Age B/A <sup>3</sup>	\$ 99.05	\$116.73

Source: MFN/LOCATE: Child Care, 6/19.

<sup>1</sup>Average cost of full time care for a 5 year old. Defined as child being in full time child care or being in kindergarten and out-of-school child care, i.e., holidays, school closures and summers. <sup>2</sup>Average cost of full time care for a 6+ school age child (out-of-school child care, i.e., holidays, school closures and summers). <sup>3</sup>Average cost of before and after school child care.

MFN's June survey respondents overwhelmingly indicated the need for financial support both to stay open or to re-open.<sup>7</sup> That financial support for childcare providers is exactly what House Bill 944 provides. HB 944 is specifically focused on supporting family-based childcare providers who reported losing \$4,154 in revenue each month due to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>8</sup>

While there needs to be systemic changes to how Maryland's childcare system is structured, including an infusion of public funding, in the meantime HB 944 is a critical bill to help ensure Maryland's childcare supply isn't further depleted putting more families with young children at risk of not having access to high quality childcare. HB 944's

focus on family-based childcare will help ensure that at least some of the most financially vulnerable childcare programs who are likely caring for the most financially vulnerable children and families are able to stay open which in turn will help close to racial and socio-economic disparities in access to high quality childcare for Maryland's children. **We respectfully request that these committees issue a favorable report on House Bill 944.**

<sup>5</sup> <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/103-child-population-by-race?loc=22&loc=2#detailed/2/22/false/1729/68,69,67,12,70,66,71,72/423,424> & <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8538-child-poverty-status-by-race?loc=22&loc=2#detailed/2/any/false/1729/4406,3303,3304,2161,3305,3306,3307,3301,4551/17225,17226>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/2020\\_MFN\\_Demographics.pdf](https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/2020_MFN_Demographics.pdf) at p.4.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/2020%20MFN%20Caring%20During%20Covid%20%28bg%29%201.3%20Pages%5B1%5D.pdf> at p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Id.

# **Solomon Sponsor Testimony HB 944 - FAV.PDF**

Uploaded by: Solomon, Delegate Jared

Position: FAV

JARED SOLOMON  
Legislative District 18  
Montgomery County

Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Education and Economic Development

Oversight Committee on Personnel



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 944 – The Family Child Care Pilot Act**

**February 24, 2021, 1:30pm**

Chair Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington, and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to present today on my legislation HB 944, The Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program.

Our state depends on child care to keep parents earning and children learning. To help achieve these essential goals, child care programs must be accessible, affordable, and high quality. These three factors are intertwined, but access is arguably the most basic. Access to child care is threatened when the supply of affordable, high-quality programs is diminished or inequitably distributed.

Licensed family child care (FCC) programs, as distinct from child care centers, are typically operated by women, based in a home, and are allowed to care for up to eight children at a time. FCC constitutes a critical component of the overall supply of child care and a necessary or preferable option for many parents due to cost, geographic proximity, hours of availability, and cultural or linguistic concerns. And yet, the number of FCC programs in Maryland has declined precipitously over the past two decades—from approximately 12,500 in 1996 to 5000 in 2020—a trend that’s mirrored nationally. The pandemic will likely make matters worse.

Multiple factors have contributed to this decline. Among them are barriers to entering and remaining in the field. Before they can launch their programs, prospective FCC providers often face a long and arduous approval process involving multiple layers of government regulations. Even after opening, providers can face significant challenges associated with a lack of resources and support for their small businesses and need for professional development and quality improvement.

**What Does the Bill Do?**

Building on a very promising effort in Montgomery County, the purpose of the legislation is to establish a pilot program to increase the supply of FCC programs and ensure the sustainability of new and existing providers. MSDE will administer the pilot program with the cooperation of the State’s network of child care resource centers. Pilot program grants will be awarded to one urban, one suburban, and one rural jurisdiction or child care licensing region, and a local match in funding will be required to secure State funding. This match can also include in kind

contributions. Within each jurisdiction or licensing region receiving an award, the pilot program's efforts shall be targeted to high-need areas.

These efforts should include:

- Coordinating with existing family child care programs;
- Conducting outreach through multi-lingual means;
- Recruiting individuals who seek to become licensed FCC providers;
- Supporting those individuals as they navigate the regulatory process through training, technical assistance, and financial incentives;
- Helping retain newly registered and existing FCC providers through technical assistance to achieve quality benchmarks, peer-to-peer mentoring, and financial incentives; and
- Working with State and local partners, such as chambers of commerce and organizations that support small businesses and women- and minority-owned businesses, to provide further assistance to FCC programs in implementing best business practices and achieving financial sustainability.

MSDE may seek funding to launch the Pilot Program immediately upon enactment of this legislation, and the Governor shall allocate \$450,000 in fiscal years 2023 and 2024 to fund three Pilot Program sites with \$150,000 per site (not counting local match). MSDE shall develop program goals and report to the General Assembly annually. Unless otherwise authorized, the pilot program and its funding requirement will terminate as of June 30, 2024.

The Montgomery County program, which is the model for this piece of legislation, recruits, develops, and retains individuals who want to open Family Child Care Centers. This is accomplished by partnering with community organizations and stakeholders in high needs areas to identify prospective participants, recruit ambassadors from established child care centers to act as mentors, and provide soup to nuts training and ongoing support. This training includes help towards professional credentialing, support on the business side of running a child care center the Women's Business Center, and long term guidance on curriculum and Maryland EXCELS certification.

The small annual budget of approximately \$300,000 pays for two staff, materials, credentialing support, and start up assistance. After only two years, the Montgomery County program has created 61 new family child care centers and 321 newly available child care slots in some of the highest poverty zip codes in the county. The overwhelming majority of these center are run by individuals who speak a foreign language – including 25 Spanish speakers.

It's clear that for a relatively small investment, we can help grow and rebuild the child care sector, support the growth of small businesses, and provide high quality services for low income families. Even with the fiscal note, I believe the return on investment is significant and **I urge a favorable report and thank you for your consideration.**

# **HB944 - MoCo Chamber - Growing Family Child Care O**

Uploaded by: Swanson, Tricia

Position: FAV





*To Lead, Advocate, and Connect as the Voice of Business*

## **House Bill 944 - Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program**

Ways and Means Committee  
Appropriations Committee

February 24, 2021

### **SUPPORT**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), as the voice of Montgomery County business, strongly supports House Bill 994. This bill would establish the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program in the Department of Education. The Department would then provide grants to local jurisdictions or child care licensing regions to increase the supply and ensure the sustainability of family child care providers in areas with above average rates of poverty and unemployment.

Our Chamber and its members have long advocated for a strong childcare system – understanding that childcare facilities are they themselves, a business, but also because of how much this industry impacts our parental workforce. Prior to COVID-19, the Chamber sought its Board of Directors thought leadership and asked them what their top concern as a business leader was and there was one answer that emerged over any other - even with the incredible diversity in size and industry on the MCCC Board of Directors. The answer that emerged was attraction and retention of top talent. When the Chamber dove into that more and asked what employees concerned about, reliable and affordable childcare quickly emerged as a front runner.

There is a true economic cost of unreliable childcare employee absences and turnover due to childcare costs employers \$2.41 billion, it reduces the State's economic output by \$1.28 billion, and reduced Maryland tax revenue by \$117 million in 2016.

When COVID-19 hit, the importance of childcare was only further highlighted. A few months ago, MCCC held a Chamber Chat webinar on the topic of childcare and COVID-19. In this webinar, over 120 local businesses tuned in and one theme that emerged was the need for public funding to support this vital industry. Even if every resident were able to get a vaccine tomorrow, if child cannot go to a safe and reliable childcare center, employees will not be able to return to the workplace.

Beyond COVID-19, a strong and reliable childcare system in the state should be viewed as an economic development recruitment tool. To compete for talent with our surrounding jurisdictions and across the nation, Maryland must differentiate ourselves in the market. Childcare should absolutely be a part of that discussion as our state has done incredible work in the area of childcare accessibility and affordability.

For the aforementioned reasons, **the Chamber strongly supports House 994 and respectfully urges a favorable report.**

*The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) accelerates the success of our nearly 400 members by advocating for increased business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and is proud to be a Montgomery County Green Certified Business.*

Tricia Swanson, Vice President, Government Relations  
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce  
301-738-0015 [www.mcccmd.com](http://www.mcccmd.com)

**HB 944\_MFN\_FAV\_Weeldreyer Go FCC.pdf**

Uploaded by: Weeldreyer, Laura

Position: FAV



**Testimony Concerning HB 944**  
**“Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Established”**  
**Submitted to the House Ways & Means and Appropriations Committees**  
**February 24, 2021**

**Position: Support**

Maryland Family Network (MFN) strongly supports HB 944, which would establish the “Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program” to increase and sustain the supply of family child care.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education, as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. We have been active in state and federal debates on child care policy and are strongly committed to ensuring that children, along with their parents, have access to high-quality, affordable programs and educational opportunities.

Registered family child care is an important part of Maryland's child care delivery system. Family child care providers offer child care that most closely resembles the care that children receive in their own homes. Family child care providers care for many children who have special needs or need care during nontraditional hours. They also provide linguistically and culturally appropriate care within many communities in the State.

Unfortunately, the number of registered family child care providers in Maryland has been declining precipitously for more than two decades, from a high of 12,514 in November 1996 to 5,126 in June 2020. Data analysis by MFN projects a further decrease of about 27% from 2021 to 2025. (See: [https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/MFN\\_Trends\\_Feb2021%20%20FINAL\\_0.pdf](https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/MFN_Trends_Feb2021%20%20FINAL_0.pdf).) The declining number of family child care homes brings a tremendous degree of unmet need.

Montgomery County's Go FCC! Program was designed to expand the supply of registered family child care providers in underserved communities and to encourage the participation of women who might face barriers to becoming registered. It has demonstrated remarkable success. HB 944 would create pilot programs and attempt to replicate that success in other jurisdictions, ultimately helping expand the supply of quality child care while supporting the efforts of low-income women--many in communities of color--to establish successful small businesses.

For these reasons, we urge your favorable consideration of HB 944.





# **HB944\_StrongFutureMaryland\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Wilkerson, Alice

Position: FAV



**Testimony in Support of House Bill 944 (Delegate Solomon)  
Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program-Established  
Ways and Means Committee  
FAVORABLE**

February 24, 2021

To Chairwoman Kaiser and Esteemed Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

On behalf of Strong Future Maryland, we write in support of House Bill 944. Strong Future Maryland works to advance bold, progressive policy changes to address systemic inequality and promote a sustainable, just, and prosperous economic future for all Marylanders.

It is well established that the first years of a child's life are deemed critical for a child's health, learning, and development. Besides a child's family, child-care providers are influential as they provide necessary experiences for a child's development. According to the [Annie E. Casey Foundation](#), 12% of children live in poverty within Maryland, which has improved over the years. Still, we see an increase in young children not receiving education or schooling and not proficient in reading and math levels. This information is quite concerning, and we believe greater access to quality child care programs would help address these issues. The Division of [Early Childhood under the Department of Education for Maryland](#) agrees that child care and early education are crucial for developing social skills, assisting with pre-literacy, and necessary mathematical skills and concepts.

Besides the educational benefits from child care, children's awareness of their environment and social/interpersonal skills are also affected. A study from [the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health](#), most children who attended daycare had better behavior and social skills than children cared for at home. The Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program Act, gives child care facilities the opportunity to grow by giving them the resources needed to provide to Maryland's youth, which benefits them as they mature and get older.

As the COVID-19 Pandemic has shown us, reliable, quality child care is a critical issue for supporting working parents, especially working mothers and essential workers. For these reasons, Strong Future Maryland urges a favorable report on House Bill 944.

On behalf of Strong Future Maryland,

*John B. King*  
Founder & Board Chair

*Alice Wilkerson*  
Executive Director

*Rachelle Wakefield*  
Policy Intern

**HB944- MoCo-DHHS(GA21).pdf**

Uploaded by: Frey, Leslie

Position: FWA



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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**ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550**

**ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270**

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**HB 944**

**DATE: February 24, 2021**

**SPONSOR: Delegate Solomon**

**ASSIGNED TO: Ways and Means and Appropriations**

**CONTACT PERSON: Leslie Frey**

**(Leslie.Frey@montgomerycountymd.gov)**

**POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT**

**(Department of Health and Human Services)**

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### **Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Established**

House Bill 944 would establish the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program in the Maryland State Department of Education to make grants to local jurisdiction or child care licensing regions to establish and support a local pilot program. The pilot program aims to increase the supply and ensure the sustainability of family child care providers in areas in need.

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services supports House Bill 944; Dr. Barbara Andrews provided testimony on behalf of the Department on the sponsor's panel. We write here to address a technical issue and suggest an amendment. As you heard from Dr. Andrews, Montgomery County currently has a program on which this bill is modeled after the County recognized a need among our family child care providers. As currently written, the bill directs the grants created under the bill to be used to "establish and support a local pilot program." We respectfully request that the bill be amended say that the grants could be used to establish and/or support a local pilot program in order to ensure that Montgomery County not be precluded from eligibility for a grant under the bill.

The suggested amendment language is included with this testimony.



Montgomery County Suggested Amendments to House Bill 944

Amendment No. 1

On page 3, after “establish and” in line 4, insert “or”.

# **HB 944 Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pil**

Uploaded by: Wilkins, Barbara

Position: INFO



**Maryland**

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET  
AND MANAGEMENT

LARRY HOGAN  
*Governor*

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD  
*Lieutenant Governor*

DAVID R. BRINKLEY  
*Secretary*

MARC L. NICOLE  
*Deputy Secretary*

## **HOUSE BILL 944 Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Established (Solomon)**

### **STATEMENT OF INFORMATION**

**DATE: February 24, 2021**

**COMMITTEE: House Ways & Means and House Appropriations**

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** HB 944 creates a four-year pilot in the State Department of Education (MSDE) to award grants to local jurisdictions or a designated child care licensing region to establish and support family child care providers within an urban, suburban, and rural region. The bill mandates annual appropriation in the amount of \$450,000 in FY 2023 and FY 2024 to fund the grant awards. MSDE is to partner with the Maryland Child Care Resource Network to administer the program.

**EXPLANATION:** The Department of Budget and Management's focus is not on the underlying policy proposal being advanced by the legislation, but rather on the mandated increase in funding for this program. DBM has the responsibility of submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually, which requires spending allocations for FY 2022 to be within the official revenues estimates approved by the Board of Revenue Estimates in December 2020.

Economic conditions remain precarious as a result of COVID-19, making revenue predictions for the remainder of FY 2021 and FY 2022 highly volatile. Many individuals and households are unemployed or underemployed, with many industry sectors operating at much less than 100% capacity. Federal stimulus programs are providing much needed relief, but the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present a significant budgetary vulnerability.

The General Assembly and Administration have successfully enacted the Governor's emergency Recovery for the Economy, Livelihoods, Industries, Entrepreneurs, and Families Act (SB 496 RELIEF Act), which provides \$1.2 billion in direct stimulus and tax relief for Maryland working families, small businesses, and those who have lost their jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is incumbent upon us to allow the impact of this unprecedented relief package on the State's economy to take effect. Further mandated spending increases need to be reevaluated within the context of an ongoing pandemic.

In response to the COVID pandemic, in FY 2020, the State dedicated \$95.4 million to the Emergency Personnel Child Care (EPCC) program in FY 2020. In addition, the state continued to pay for children participating in the Child Care Scholarship Program based on enrollment, rather than attendance through the end of FY 2020, to ensure participating providers continued to receive payments when enrollment declined as a result of COVID-19. In FY 2021 (as of 12/21/20), an additional \$3.6 million was spent for EPCC program.

Through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021, Maryland received additional federal funding to support child care for children and families. MSDE is establishing a \$60 million grant program to support eligible child care programs throughout the State to help meet operating costs and address lost revenue.

On February 14, 2021, Governor Hogan announced that licensed child care centers and registered family child care providers are eligible to apply for Child Care Pandemic Relief Fund grants to help meet increased operation costs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The online grant application must be completed by March 3, 2021. For more information: <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org>

**For additional information, contact Barbara Wilkins at  
(410) 260-6371 or [barbara.wilkins1@maryland.gov](mailto:barbara.wilkins1@maryland.gov)**