



**Additional Testimony from Child Care Providers Concerning SB 806
"Child Care Providers and Employees - Bonuses"
Submitted to the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
March 9, 2022**

Position: **SUPPORT**

In addition to our organizational testimony in support of SB 806, Maryland Family Network presents the public comments of child care providers from all over our state who strongly support this legislation. Many of them share their own experiences and describe how this bill would help attract and retain staff. We urge a favorable report for SB 806.

The struggles is that we can't compete with the public school system. The bonus will help us to at least have some form of leverage and options to offer hires.

Rhonda Darrell Watson

I am a Center owner/Director and I care very much about children, families and the profession. The pandemic has exacerbated many things related to childcare and we need to address fixing them. We are a skeleton crew and have lost a couple of staff and most of our subs. This is causing so much stress and many teachers are worried about taking a day off. We are exhausted and stressed which is not healthy for us or the children in care. Our children are so delayed in social/emotional and speech & language, truly raised by screens during the pandemic. It takes so much longer to help them learn routines or regulate bodies causing tantrums and trauma for teachers. If we could pay more and attract more staff to our program, it would improve our ability to meet the needs of the children where they are. This is a year that all staff should get a significant raise and have more staff to support them but the wages are too low to compete with other easier jobs that pay the same or more.

Flora Gee, Prince George's County

Bonuses would help me compete with Walmart's \$18 an hour.

Amy Heger, Salisbury

It is hard to get someone to work because child care providers can't afford to pay high salaries.

Josephine Chan, Gaithersburg

Child care providers do a lot of preparation for children before entering school but with little

pay. Since hiring quality staff is a must, I can't pay the amount they are willing to work for with their degrees etc.

Millis Gregory, Prince George's County

Childcare is essential to our state's infrastructure and economy. All families should have access to high quality childcare to be able to work, pursue higher education, and seek medical care. Making childcare more accessible for all families requires greater investment in our childcare workers. They have also been frontline workers during the pandemic, even when many schools were virtual. We as a state own them for their essential work.

When I was pregnant with my twins, my biggest stressor was finding quality, affordable childcare. We do not live near family and I was panicked about not being able to find childcare before I had to return to work. Paying childcare workers more and increasing opportunities for childcare scholarships would make a huge difference for Maryland families.

Jenna R. Silverman, Columbia

Extra money is an incentive to stay and feel valued and appreciated.

Delores Robinson, Fort Washington