

**SB 920\_MFN\_FAV\_Weeldreyer.pdf**

Uploaded by: Beth Morrow

Position: FAV



**Testimony Concerning SB 920**  
**“Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship**  
**Program – Alterations”**  
**Submitted to the Senate Education, Health, and**  
**Environmental Affairs Committee**  
**March 15, 2022**

**Position: Support**

Maryland Family Network (MFN) strongly supports SB 920, which would make vast improvements to the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). These alterations would render CCSP far more effective in serving the parents and child care providers who participate and in achieving its mission. MFN urges your favorable consideration.

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.

CCSP is currently the State’s largest single investment in early childhood education. It serves a dual purpose of bolstering Maryland’s workforce and economy by removing a major barrier to employment for low- to moderate-income parents, who would otherwise struggle to find and afford care arrangements for their children. CCSP is therefore critical to our efforts to keep parents earning and children learning.

By raising subsidy rates and expanding eligibility, Maryland’s program has in recent years been transformed from one of the poorest ones to one of the very best in the country. For this, MFN commends the General Assembly and the Administration. Unfortunately, CCSP still too often fails to fulfill its promise. Parents can face lengthy delays in the scholarship application process, and consequently fail to take advantage of job opportunities. Providers struggle with late payments from the State that hamper their ability to sustain affordable, high quality programs. The application itself is overdue for careful review and streamlining.

MFN believes all these shortcomings may help explain why, according to Department of Budget and Management estimates, only 22 percent of income-eligible families and only 29 percent of child care providers participate in CCSP.

SB 920 would establish a system of presumptive and proxy eligibility for parents while their applications are determined, require prompt payments to providers, and initiate a thorough review of application procedures. These would constitute the next major strides in the ongoing improvement of CCSP. MFN strongly urges the Committee’s favorable consideration.



# **SB0920 -- Early Childhood Development - Child Care**

Uploaded by: Brian Levine

Position: FAV



**Senate Bill 920 -- *Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program - Alterations*  
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
March 15, 2022  
Support**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, supports Senate Bill 920 -- *Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program - Alterations*.

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to establish a process for granting presumptive eligibility for a subsidy under the Child Care Scholarship Program. House Bill 995 further requires MSDE to award a subsidy that ensures an individual will not have to pay a copay for child care if the individual provides proof of participation in certain State or federal programs and employment or enrollment in an education or career training program.

MCCC has identified the issue of child care access and affordability as an economic imperative that needs to be addressed to help Maryland employers and employees succeed. There are significant economic costs to unreliable and unaffordable child care in Maryland.

MCCC contends that increasing affordable and quality child care was critical prior to the pandemic and is now even more important. As Maryland seeks to open up more following the Omicron variant and get more people back to work, child care challenges present a growing threat to the State's economy. The rapid workplace changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have created new challenges in attracting and retaining employees. Now more than ever, the availability of quality and affordable child care is an important determinate to the success of the workforce.

**For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports Senate Bill 920 and respectfully requests a favorable report.**

*The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of our nearly 500 members, advocates for growth in 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 a proud Montgomery County Green Certified Business.*

*Brian Levine / Vice President of Government Affairs  
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce  
51 Monroe Street / Suite 1800  
Rockville, Maryland 20850  
301-738-0015 / www.mcccmd.com*

# **EHEA Committee March 15 SB 920 CC Scholarship Prog**

Uploaded by: Christina Peusch

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 5000 members working in the field of early childhood. We believe children are our most important natural resource and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.*

### **Senate Bill 920 Early Childhood Development-Child Care Scholarship Program - Alterations Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee Position: Favorable SUPPORT**

The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) enthusiastically supports Senate Bill 920. As a non-profit representing close to 5,000 child care professionals, we are appreciative and offer our sincere thanks to the General Assembly and especially to champion for child care and children – Senator King for her advocacy, leadership and support for the important child care legislation.

MSCCA's priorities agenda includes ensuring families have access to affordable, consistent, quality child care options and to alleviate barriers for families and child care providers as child care is essential to the economy. We believe children are our most important natural resource and must meet the needs of all Maryland's children from birth to five and beyond. SB 920 aligns with these priorities and will address numerous obstacles and inequities to fix our child care scholarship system to support more deserving children and families.

Prior to the pandemic MSCCA conducted surveys of our members focused on child care scholarship/subsidy program as we were receiving many complaints about delays in payment for services rendered, families struggling with renewal paperwork and new families inquiring for child care being denied and unable to speak to anyone at MSDE to help them. MSCCA met with partner associations and co-hosted town halls focused on child care scholarship/subsidy to gain even more feedback, discussion and provide possible solutions to address concerns within this state system as more money is being invested in child care scholarships. We need an equitable, efficient way to support families, children and the child care businesses electing to accept subsidies/scholarships.

SB 920 will enhance efficiencies and assist MSDE by requiring them to work with national experts to review, update, streamline, and simplify the child care scholarship application to ensure it is accessible, equitable, clear, and easily completed by all families.

This legislation addresses presumptive eligibility as a key component of SB 920 which will allow families to enter or reenter the workforce or school immediately as they will be presumed eligible and be given time to provide full documentation necessary for processing and formal approval while their child/children are in a licensed, legal child care setting. Without child care the workforce cannot work.

Additionally, this legislation will expand and expedite automatic access to additional benefits like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, housing vouchers, and Guaranteed Access therefore eliminating additional stress for families while creating a more streamline state system to serve our most at risk children/families.

Finally, Senate Bill 920 establishes in law a provider payment timeline requiring MSDE to pay child care providers participating in the child care scholarship program within 10 business days of receiving the full invoice. Child care small businesses have been deterred from participating in the scholarship program due to the delays in payment and communication issues. As struggling small, fully tuition dependent businesses, we cannot continue to subsidize the

subsidy system. Stakeholders utilizing the system should be considered and included to be successful. The system needs to change to support all those participating, including providers while still maintaining accountability measures for all.

MSCCA fully supports the four components of this bill as they will impact positive change for children, families and child care providers. Child care is essential and the workforce behind the workforce. Maryland has lost over 900 child care businesses since January of 2020 and tens of thousands of slots creating access issues. We must find ways to support child care and families as it is an economic and equity imperative.

MSCCA urges a favorable report.

**SB 920\_MFN\_FAV\_Macsherry.pdf**

Uploaded by: Clinton Macsherry

Position: FAV





**Additional Testimony from Child Care Providers Concerning SB 920 “Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations”  
Submitted to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
March 15, 2022**

Position: **SUPPORT**

*In addition to our organizational testimony in support of SB 920, 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 improvements to the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP) would help Maryland families. We urge a favorable report for SB 920.*

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Delayed CCSP payments have caused me to gain late fees, spend several hours having to make payment arrangements. [Express lane eligibility] would be a win, win to all involved. Why should a parent have to apply to so many agencies? Applying to assistance should be a one stop shop. With so many nonprofit agencies allowing scholarships just based on income a parent will go there first before having to go through all of the back and forth with the scholarship program. I feel presumptive eligibility would benefit because parents wouldn't have to wait a month to start a job or school. My only concern how long will the final process take and what happens if the final result be denial.

*Rhonda Darrell Watson, Columbia*

[CCSP administration is] so bad-I am still missing payments from an invoice paid incorrectly in August even though I have sent an inquiry and notified the Asst Deputy twice. "We'll look into it" and no payment still in February of 2022... The CCS program is so poorly run and the record keeping and audits are exhaustive. Many providers are now opting out.

A simplified CCSP application is needed. I have a Master's in Education and I am unsure what some questions are asking for, whether the answer should be yes or no because of the wording or which family member should be listed in some sections.

Presumptive eligibility-- for a parent just re-entering the workforce, who is offered employment and does not have the resources to pay for child care (Registration Fee, Deposit and Tuition) before they get the first paycheck, can't wait 30 days or longer to receive a voucher to submit to a program. So the choices are don't take the job or choose unlicensed child care.

*Flora Gee, Prince George's County*

I am an owner of a Maryland Childcare Center. The Night Watch Childcare- the state's only fully overnight childcare center. Over 90% of my parents are on scholarship. The inconstant



information my parents receive and the slow communication makes it very hard to help parents through the complicated process. Parents are being rejected because they are sending jpegs versus a PDF. There are extra forms parents need to use that are not clearly explained on the application. Only 5 day notice is sent by mail about vouchers expiring, so they are expired by the time we get the letter. I have parents having large balances as we wait for vouchers to come through or be redetermined when their circumstances haven't changed.

It is challenging for parents who are reentering the workforce and do not have paystubs. I either lose business or foot the bill while we wait for paperwork to be processed. It shouldn't take 30 days to review 6--7 pieces of paper. Please allow parents to get funding ASAP. and give them a deadline to submit paystubs. Because of delayed CCSP payments, I have had to borrow money from my parents and take out predatory funding advancements to pay wages and rent. With presumptive eligibility, new moms coming back from maternity leave or just going back to work could get funding faster. Families with multiple kids struggle to pay for childcare. 30 days to hear that they sent a jpeg of their ID instead of a PDF or finding out that they needed an employment verification statement (which is NOT on the application) delays funding. I am currently footing the bill and offering payment plans to help parents who are just going back to work and do not have paystubs. The 4 weeks worth of paystubs is holding things up DRASTICALLY. I offer the payment plan, but if we hear 8 weeks later (4 weeks of stubs and then 30 days for processing) that they are not eligible because they missed a form or now the paystubs are outdated, it holds things up.

*Amy Heger, Salisbury*

Delayed CCSP payments have affected me. It took forever to get money. A simplified CCSP application process would help parents who work with a lower income and more siblings. Presumptive eligibility would make it much convenient, less of stress, and less work.

*Josephine Chan, Gaithersburg*

By CCSP payments coming in late, it delays what needs to be done. A simplified CCSP application process would help families tremendously. Presumptive eligibility would help families that are in need of child care to get it immediately.

*Millis Gregory, Prince George's County*

Our parents need help with childcare, some of them cannot afford it, they need to get back to work. If parents can't afford childcare, they will keep their children home and I won't have to hire anyone. We won't have children and that's what is happening now. Our parents need help from all of us, including our government. Presumptive eligibility would help because some parents can't wait the 30 days or the employer would choose another candidate.

Delayed CCSP payments made me late on some of my bills.

*Lisa Tate, Baltimore*

I am a home daycare provider, and my daycare is my income to pay my bills, keep my doors open. I have gone up to 3 more months without receiving payments from family and scholarship. My bills would be late and on top of that would get late fees because of it. I have lost so much money taking scholarship families the past 5 years. Always receiving my payment more than 2 to 3 months for some families

A simplified CCSP application process would help the families out a lot because they don't understand what is happening and what they are filling out.

Presumptive eligibility would help the families out a lot. But I would need to make sure I would be paid for my time because I have lost a lot of families owing me hundreds of dollars due to applications not being approved. The families getting free childcare and not getting 1 cent in the past from families.

*Maria Rosella Franklin, Baltimore County*

Simplified CCSP applications would decrease burden on families to try to access childcare. Presumptive eligibility helps families have faster access to childcare and relieves stress on families who need childcare in order to work. It is extremely stressful on families to delay childcare and lose work opportunities that arise while they are waiting.

*Jenna R. Silverman, Columbia*

[Improving the CCSP application process] would help more families to obtain quality child care with qualified staff. Lower enrollment equals less income. It would encourage more families to seek assistance for quality child care. Attention to these Child Care Bills are sincerely needed! (Loans, Scholarships, and Bonuses).

*Delores Robinson, Fort Washington*

### **Child Support**

I had 1 family that had father on child support and father hasn't paid anything over 2 years and her job changed and she couldn't afford fulltime care. Scholarship wouldn't pay anymore because they were adding the child support as income and father hasn't paid anything over 2 years. Which wasn't right and the mother had to pull her child from my program.

Out of state NY child support case filed, and mother moved to MD filed for vouchers and filed for her 2 kids. But child with NY dad that she has no clue his whereabouts. Didn't receive scholarship. I let parent go because of other issues but kids mother owes me \$223 still.

*Maria Rosella Franklin, Baltimore County*

Parents often have an arrangement and reporting the other parent to child support enforcement is something they don't want to do, for reasons that may include creating more disharmony and less cooperation than they have already. I have seen the amount paid for health insurance by a non-custodial parent be used as income and knock a family out of the eligibility range to qualify for CCS.

*Flora Gee, Prince George's County*

Some women are afraid to go to child support, due to retaliation of their spouse. They are trying to work and sometimes can't depend on the fathers. They are the single parent.

Some women are afraid of retaliation from the fathers or sometimes the mother.

*Lisa Tate, Baltimore County*

I had parents wouldn't apply because of fear of the other parent. They also felt it was unfair if they had a prior child support case the payment was included even if the parent didn't pay.

*Rhonda Darrell Watson*

Some of my parents have unofficial agreements with fathers. Some are leaving domestic violence situations, but do not have all of the court orders in place. It is just one more large step moms have to take to get funding.

*Amy Heger, Salisbury*

There is much difficulty in moms receiving child support from 'dead beat dads'. This is a real deterrent.

*Delores Robinson, Fort Washington*

# **SB920 Written Support- Child Care Scholarship.pdf**

Uploaded by: Demaune Millard

Position: FAV



## Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 920

### Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations

**To:** Chair Paul Pinsky and Members of the Environmental, Health & Education Committee

**From:** Demaune A. Millard, President & CEO, Family League of Baltimore

**Date:** March 15, 2022

Family League of Baltimore (Family League) supports Senate Bill 920 as it would require the State Department of Education to establish a certain process for granting presumptive eligibility for a subsidy under the Child Care Scholarship Program; require the Department to award a certain subsidy to an individual who submits certain proof; prohibit the Department from requiring an individual to take certain actions to be eligible for a certain subsidy; require the Department to pay a certain child care provider within 10 days of receipt of an invoice from a child care provider.

This bill is necessary for families across Maryland, specifically the city of Baltimore as childcare enrollment can be a hassle because of the cost. Most children come from working families and not being able to afford sending their kids to childcare because they cannot afford it can be a hinderance. While there are families that have access to the scholarship, some are reluctant to apply because of the barriers that are in place. For instance, some children are in two parent households and the current law requires for the applying parent to apply for child support, this this takes that requirement away. This can be an issue because sometimes two parent household can still equate to low-income and financial struggles. Another issue with current requirements for families is the lengthy application and vocabulary used for applying, so allowing families the receive Temporary Cash Assistance and Social Security Income to automatically be eligible could lift a burden.

While families have been impacted by the current child care scholarship laws, providers have been as well. Providers are reluctant to accept scholarship children because of the length of time they have to wait to receive payment. This causes them to either turn children away or hold spot for an unknow length of time until the payment is received. SB920 would require the department to issue payment within 10 days of receiving the invoice from the childcare provider causing a financial relief, especially to smaller, family operated ones. With the passage of this bill providers can accept more children and families can send their children to daycare while the continue to work.

As the designated Local Management Board for the City of Baltimore, Family League works collaboratively to support data-informed, community-driven solutions to align resources to dismantle systemic barriers that limit the possibilities for children, families, and communities.

Our policy focus is also guided by and in support of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention Youth and Victim Services' Results for Child Well-Being. Through our strategic planning process, we have prioritized three of these results areas, focusing on the success of Baltimore's children in school; the economic stability of families; and the safety of communities for children, youth, and families. We support SB920 in particular because of its alignment with the result areas that work to ensure *Children Are Successful in School* and *Families Are Economically Stable*.

For more information contact Keontae Kells, Executive Administrator [kkells@familyleague.org](mailto:kkells@familyleague.org)

**SB0920 - 03.15.22-- Early Childhood Development -**

Uploaded by: Donald Fry

Position: FAV





# POSITION STATEMENT

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 920 – EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT –  
CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM- ALTERATIONS

Sponsor: Senator King

March 15, 2022

DONALD C. FRY  
PRESIDENT & CEO  
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

## Position: Support

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports Senate Bill 920, which would specify eligibility requirements for the Child Care Scholarship Program, administered by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), as well as to ensure that an applicant can receive the scholarship while waiting for eligibility determination. The bill also provides that individuals will not be required to pay a copay for child care if they are receiving other various public assistance benefits, including Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, Temporary Cash Assistance, and a Guaranteed Access Grant for higher education.

The GBC COVID-19 Business Recovery Advisory Council, comprised of regional business executives, made a number of recommendations to assist businesses recover from the pandemic, with a particular focus on small and minority-owned businesses. Recognizing both the immediate problems, as well as a systemic shortage of quality licensed child-care options, the council called 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.

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. The provisions in Senate Bill 920 would provide guidance to ensure that those who are in most need of child care scholarships can immediately receive assistance, and limits co-pays for those least able to pay them. In turn, businesses will benefit from having employees with reliable child care, thereby stabilizing the company's workforce.

Senate Bill 920 is consistent with one of the key tenets in *Gaining a Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland*, a report published by the GBC that identifies eight core pillars for a competitive business environment and job growth. The pillar provides:

**Government leadership that unites with business as a partner.** Maryland leaders must set a welcoming tone that communicates positive support for business, respect for the private sector as a partner, not an adversary, and reflects a strategic plan for business growth and job creation.

**For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 920.**

*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 67-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

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(410) 727-2820 • www.gbc.org

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**MD Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB 920.pdf**

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: FAV





ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**March 15, 2022**

**SB920**

**Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations**

**Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee**

**SUPPORT**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in SUPPORT to Senate Bill 920. 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.

Senate Bill 920 establishes a process for presumptive eligibility for families for the Maryland Child Care Scholarship Program. This legislation requires the Maryland State Department of Education to award a subsidy under the program in an amount sufficient to ensure that a parent or guardian will not have to pay a copay for child care if they show participation in WIC, SNAP, SSI, TCA or other programs.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has supported proposals seeking to “expand assistance to parents with children and improve family formation and stability.” (*Letter to Congress on Child Tax Credit*, USCCB, 2016). In the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace asserted that all persons deserve “a wage sufficient to maintain a family and allow it to live decently... There can be several different ways to make a family wage a concrete reality. Various forms of important social provisions help to bring it about, for example, family subsidies and other contributions for dependent family members...”

The parameters put for in Senate Bill 920 are tangible way to achieve this stability for low-income families throughout the state. Child Care is an essential component to supporting strong, economically secure families and thus the Church supports this bill as a part of its priority interest in alleviating poverty. Enabling 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 Conference appreciates your consideration, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 920.

**PGCRC-SB 0920.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jennifer Iverson

Position: FAV

March 14, 2022

**Testimony Concerning Support for:  
SB 0920: Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations**

**Submitted to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee  
Jennifer Iverson, Executive Director  
Prince George’s Child Resource Center, Inc.  
9475 Lottsford Road, Suite 202, Largo, MD 20774  
(301) 772-8420, ext. 1005  
jiverson@pgcrc.org**

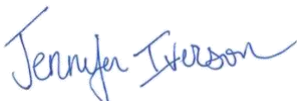
**We urge your support for legislation that will benefit working families, and the struggling child care providers that serve them.**

Prince George’s Child Resource Center envisions vibrant, healthy communities where individuals and families care, support, and advocate for each other and invest in creating opportunities for children to develop strong, successful life paths. The Resource Center has been working tirelessly since 1990 to support both child care providers in their efforts to strive for quality in their child care programs, and parents as they seek child care where their children can thrive.

SB 0920 has the potential to eliminate barriers that families are currently facing when attempting to access the child care scholarship. **As the Child Care Resource Center for Prince George’s County, we hear directly from parents who have had to reject employment offers because they could not get the scholarship processed; and we hear from providers who are no longer willing to accept scholarship since they cannot count on payment. This has a disastrous impact on families, providers, and our economy.** The scholarship program, and tying it to EXCELS (Maryland’s quality rating system), was designed so that children with little access to resources could enroll in high-quality child care programs. **The current state of scholarship administration is actually causing the opposite:** the highest quality providers, who can fill their programs with full-pay children, choose not to provide care for lower-income children. This is increasing inequity in Maryland, and if this goes unchecked, we will see disparities school readiness increase.

Of all the hard decisions you need to make as legislators, this is an easy one. Presumptive eligibility means access for families and timely payments means child care businesses can be further stabilized in these difficult times.

Thank you for your leadership for our community. Together we can help child care programs to stay open successfully and offer more choices for families, when we make sure that all the pieces and parts of policy ideas come together. Again, I urge your support for SB 0920.



# **WDC Testimony SB0920-2022\_FINAL-1.pdf**

Uploaded by: JoAnne Koravos

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

[www.womensdemocraticclub.org](http://www.womensdemocraticclub.org)

**Senate Bill 0920 - Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs – March 15, 2022  
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC) for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC urges passage of SB0920 - Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations. This bill requires the State Department of Education to grant presumptive eligibility under the Maryland's Child Care Scholarship Program (CSS) to a family who already participates in certain income-qualified programs. The CSS provides financial assistance with child care costs to eligible working families in Maryland. These "presumptive benefit" programs include the Federal Special Supplemental Food Program for Women and Infants (WIC); Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Federal Choice Voucher Program; Maryland Guaranteed Access Grant Program; Federal Supplemental Security Income Benefits Program (SSI); Temporary Cash Assistance Program (TANF); and employment or enrollment in a qualified education or career training program. This bill also requires the establishment of a streamlined application process for "presumptive benefit" applicants including an on-line certification. A qualified individual shall receive benefits pending review. The CSS subsidy shall be sufficient such that no co-pay will be required. Furthermore, an individual is not required to pursue or receive child support in order to qualify, and the Department shall pay a child care provider within 10 days after the Department receives an invoice.

This legislation would simplify and streamline the child care scholarship application process for families that already qualify for other means-tested programs. This legislation also requires timely CSS payments for childcare providers, many of which are small businesses that operate with tight financial margins, and for which delayed payments can mean an inability to make payrolls.

**We ask for your support for SB0920 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.** To maintain our competitive edge as a State, we need to keep women in our workforce.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano  
President

# **SB 920- Favorable.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kristi Simon

Position: FAV



## Central Maryland Chamber

*The Center of Intelligent Business*

Legislative Position: Favorable

Senate Bill 920: Child Care Capital Support Revolving Loan Fund  
Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

The Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce (CMC) was formed in 2017, a merger of two existing chambers- The Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber (originally founded in 1948) and the West Anne Arundel County Chamber (originally founded in 1962). The CMC is a regional organization representing approximately 350 businesses in the Central Maryland corridor and exists to be the primary business resource and advocate as the area experiences exponential growth.

The Central Maryland Chamber is writing in support of SB 920.

SB 920 would require the State Department of Education to establish a certain process for granting presumptive eligibility for a subsidy under the Child Care Scholarship Program; requiring the Department to award a certain subsidy to an individual who submits certain proof; prohibiting the Department from requiring an individual to take certain actions to be eligible for a certain subsidy; requiring the Department to pay a certain childcare provider within 10 days of receipt of an invoice from a childcare provider.

Many children from low-income families receive childcare credits/ scholarships for qualifying childcare centers. The process is complicated at times for qualified children to be approved and for the scholarship payments to begin. Presumptive eligibility will allow the process to begin more quickly for payments to low-income individuals while they are waiting on adjudication and helps the childcare facilities to get paid soon. It gets the children into care sooner, while studies have shown can be instrumental in a child's development. These facilities provide not only care so their parents can re-enter the workforce, but healthy meals and learning opportunities to prepare them for future success.

Problems are often reported with MSDE making payments quickly, so the requirement to have MSDE make these payments within a certain period of time is necessary. The establishment of timelines, processes and guidelines will allow for the program to run more smoothly.

Childcare is one of the biggest issues we're hearing from Chamber member businesses right now. It affects our employees and employers, with employees needing to get to work to support themselves and businesses needing staff to keep their doors open and grow. After the pandemic exacerbated the childcare gap, we understand there are no simple solutions to this problem. We're also hearing this loud and clear from our partners at Ft. Meade as their childcare system can only handle approximately 40% of the demand of their servicemembers.

While businesses are struggling to recover from impacts of the pandemic in large part due to staffing, and individuals are having a hard time reentering the workforce due to a lack of childcare, a program like this can make a huge difference to Maryland's business community. This is a win all around and a great start for a solution to the childcare crisis we are currently experiencing.

The Central Maryland Chamber urges you to support SB920.

# **SB 920\_MFN\_FAV\_Weeldreyer.pdf**

Uploaded by: Laura Weeldreyer

Position: FAV





**Testimony Concerning SB 920**  
**“Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship**  
**Program – Alterations”**  
**Submitted to the Senate Education, Health, and**  
**Environmental Affairs Committee**  
**March 15, 2022**

**Position: Support**

Maryland Family Network (MFN) strongly supports SB 920, which would make vast improvements to the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). These alterations would render CCSP far more effective in serving the parents and child care providers who participate and in achieving its mission. MFN urges your favorable consideration.

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.

CCSP is currently the State’s largest single investment in early childhood education. It serves a dual purpose of bolstering Maryland’s workforce and economy by removing a major barrier to employment for low- to moderate-income parents, who would otherwise struggle to find and afford care arrangements for their children. CCSP is therefore critical to our efforts to keep parents earning and children learning.

By raising subsidy rates and expanding eligibility, Maryland’s program has in recent years been transformed from one of the poorest ones to one of the very best in the country. For this, MFN commends the General Assembly and the Administration. Unfortunately, CCSP still too often fails to fulfill its promise. Parents can face lengthy delays in the scholarship application process, and consequently fail to take advantage of job opportunities. Providers struggle with late payments from the State that hamper their ability to sustain affordable, high quality programs. The application itself is overdue for careful review and streamlining.

MFN believes all these shortcomings may help explain why, according to Department of Budget and Management estimates, only 22 percent of income-eligible families and only 29 percent of child care providers participate in CCSP.

SB 920 would establish a system of presumptive and proxy eligibility for parents while their applications are determined, require prompt payments to providers, and initiate a thorough review of application procedures. These would constitute the next major strides in the ongoing improvement of CCSP. MFN strongly urges the Committee’s favorable consideration.



**SB920\_MoCo\_Frey\_SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Leslie Frey

Position: FAV



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

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**SB 920**

**DATE: March 15, 2022**

**SPONSOR: Senator King**

**ASSIGNED TO: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs**

**CONTACT PERSON: Leslie Frey (leslie.frey@montgomerycountymd.gov)**

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

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### **Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations**

Senate Bill 920 creates a presumptive eligibility process to enable families seeking to access the State's Child Care Scholarship Program (the Program) to receive a child care subsidy before and during the eligibility determination process for the Program. Under the bill, an individual would submit a form to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) certifying that the individual meets the eligibility requirements for the Program. Upon submitting the form, the individual would receive a subsidy under the Program beginning on the day the form was submitted. If the individual does not fill out an application for the Program within 15 days of submitting the form, the subsidy would end after 15 days. If the individual fills out an application for the Program within 15 days of submitting the form and MSDE determines the individual does not qualify for a subsidy after reviewing the application, the subsidy would end on the date on which MSDE makes that determination. The subsidy would be payable to child care providers and would be for an amount sufficient to ensure that the individual would not be required to pay a co-pay for child care if the individual provides proof of participation in certain benefits programs or is employed or enrolled in an education or career training program. MSDE would be prohibited from requiring an individual to pursue or receive child support payments or apply for services from a child support agency in order to receive the subsidy.

Senate Bill 920, if enacted, would have a twofold policy benefit: it would encourage families to access the Child Care Scholarship Program and complete the application process and it would enable child care providers to access funding as soon as a child enrolls in care. At a critical time when child care providers are struggling to recover from the economic impacts of COVID-19, Senate Bill 920 could provide an additional path to relief by enhancing an existing program.

Since the onset of the pandemic, Montgomery County has allocated over \$21M to supporting child care programs in an effort to maintain an adequate supply of child care providers while parents balanced work, virtual learning for school-aged children, and other uncertainties during the pandemic. Despite these efforts, child care providers across the state remain in need of the financial support offered by Senate Bill 920. Montgomery County respectfully urges the committees to issue a favorable report.

# **SB 920\_MDCC\_Early Childhood Development-Child Care**

Uploaded by: Maddy Voytek

Position: FAV



**LEGISLATIVE POSITION:**

**Favorable**

**Senate Bill 920**

**Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program - Alterations**

**Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**

**Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 5,500 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic recovery and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

**SB 920** would direct the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to establish a process that would grant presumptive eligibility for parents applying for the Child Care Scholarship Program. By granting presumptive eligibility for the Child Care Scholarship Program, **HB 995** would ensure that childcare providers are eligible to receive subsidy payments for their services during the time in which MSDE is making a final determination. Further, **HB 995** requires MSDE to pay childcare providers within 10 days of the date in which they received an invoice from a childcare provider.

The Maryland Chamber of Commerce and its members are tremendously supportive of measures such as **SB 920** aiming to address the State's current childcare shortage. The childcare crisis, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, is having an exceedingly negative impact on workers' ability to return to the labor market. The shortage in childcare is without a doubt a factor preventing Maryland employers from returning to full operations, further contributing to the State's anemic recovery.

**SB 920** will ensure that childcare providers are paid in a prompt and timely fashion which will provide additional certainty in meeting the many financial obligations Maryland small businesses have. By providing greater certainty and process for state payments, **SB 920** will allow childcare providers to stay open for business and operate in a more sustainable business model.

**SB 920** is just a small step to fixing the many challenges facing Maryland's childcare infrastructure. However, this small step is imperative to keeping these small businesses open and getting Marylanders back to work. For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **Favorable Report** on **Senate Bill 920**.

# **SB920.CCSP.Council.Support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rachel London

Position: FAV



## Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
SB 920: Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program - Alterations  
March 15, 2022  
Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities live the lives they want with the support they need. The Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP) provides financial assistance with child care costs to eligible families in Maryland. The eligible family will receive a voucher to use to purchase child care directly from the provider of their choice. The CCSP has undergone dramatic improvements over the last couple of years. Additional funding coupled with policy changes, including changes to income eligibility requirements and raised rates, allowed more families to qualify for subsidies and be able to afford more child care. **This bill would streamline access to the CCSP by establishing presumptive eligibility, expanding express lane or dual eligibility, expediting provider payments, simplifying the application, and terminating the child support requirement.**

**The potential impact to families of children with disabilities must be noted.**

- Eligible families of children with disabilities are given first priority.
- There is a “special disability rate” that can be used to support children with disabilities.

Programs must provide children with disabilities and their families an equal opportunity to participate in the child care program and services by providing reasonable modifications, accommodations, and provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services needed for effective communication.<sup>i</sup> Some of these additional accommodations may be costly. In recognition of that, **Maryland law allows for increased CCSP reimbursement rates to a child care provider for the additional costs of providing one-time or ongoing accommodations to a child with a disability – up to 15% above the traditional reimbursement rates or more if approved by MSDE.**<sup>ii</sup>

The majority of child care providers want to support children with disabilities but need assistance to do so. It is our understanding that this “special disability rate” has not been utilized since SFY1998.<sup>iii</sup> **Making sure this rate is known about and used, coupled with other efforts to streamline access to the CCSP, would help the families of children with disabilities who are still struggling to find and keep high quality child care where their children with disabilities can learn and play alongside their peers without disabilities.**

When the process is streamlined, more families, including families of children with disabilities will be able to access the child care they need. In order to provide all children, including children with disabilities, and their families with equal access to quality, inclusive child care, it is important that the process works for providers and families.

Contact: Rachel London, Executive Director, [RLondon@md-council.org](mailto:RLondon@md-council.org)

<sup>i</sup> Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. § 12101 (2009).

<sup>ii</sup> COMAR 13A.14.06.11(E)(5).

<sup>iii</sup> *Maryland Family Network Public Policy Handbook 2017-2018*, Appendix B.

# **SB920Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ruth Carolina Reyes

Position: FAV





# ARCO IRIS

## BILINGUAL CHILDREN'S CENTER

**March 15, 2022**

**Testimony Concerning Support for:**

**SB920**

**Ruth Carolina Reyes**

**Arco Iris Bilingual Children's Center**

**14502 Greenview Drive, suite102**

**301-483-8800 Center**

**301-538-1978 Cellular**

**arcoirisbcc@gmail.com**

**We urge your support for legislation to help ensure a thriving child care system in Maryland for our families.**

Child care providers across the nation continue to struggle as they recover during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Child care providers are in crisis, and so are families; Prince George's County is no exception. I am also no exception. As the Owner/Director of Arco Iris Bilingual Children's Center, I have seen how my families have struggled paying for childcare during the last few years; it is unlike anything I have seen before. Many families want to come to my center because it is certified Maryland Excels level 3, providing high quality education with well educated teachers in a unique bilingual environment. However, they cannot due to their economic means which do not give them access on their own. When

these same families want to access the childcare scholarship they enter a system that is bureaucratic and burdensome.

The issue is the extensive and unprecedented delays in providing working families and single mothers the financial resources needed for their child care needs. This issue does not just impact families but also childcare providers since providers have to wait an extended period of time to obtain the scholarship money.

This bill SB920 will help many families very much and allow them the ability to access high quality centers like mine. It is now more pressing than ever to resolve this issue. Although the state has increased the income levels for child care scholarships, I have seen firsthand the extensive delays in answering working families and single mothers who often lack support systems. These families rely on child care centers to reenter the workforce. Therefore, providing the rapid and efficient assistance for these families is necessary, not only for them, but also the child care centers which are an essential ingredient for ensuring a healthy Maryland economy.

Sincerely,

R. Carolina Reyes

# **FAV BJC SB920- Early Childhood Development – Child**

Uploaded by: Sarah Miicke

Position: FAV

## OFFICERS

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## MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Adat Chaim Congregation  
American Jewish Committee  
Americans for Peace Now  
Baltimore Chapter  
American Israel Public Affairs Committee  
American Red Magen David for Israel  
American Zionist Movement  
Amit Women  
Association of Reform Zionists of America  
Baltimore Board of Rabbis  
Baltimore Hebrew Congregation  
Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance  
Baltimore Men's ORT  
Baltimore Zionist District  
Beth Am Congregation  
Beth El Congregation  
Beth Israel Congregation  
Beth Shalom Congregation of  
Howard County  
Beth Tfiloh Congregation  
B'nai B'rith, Chesapeake Bay Region  
B'nai Israel Congregation  
B'nai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation  
Bolton Street Synagogue  
Chevra Ahavas Chesed, Inc.  
Chevrei Tzedek Congregation  
Chizuk Amuno Congregation  
Congregation Beit Tikvah  
Congregation Beth Shalom of  
Carroll County  
Congregation Tiferes Yisroel  
Federation of Jewish Women's  
Organizations of Maryland  
Hadassah  
Har Sinai - Oheb Shalom Congregation  
J Street  
Jewish Federation of Howard County  
Jewish Labor Committee  
Jewish War Veterans  
Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary  
Jewish Women International  
Jews For Judaism  
Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah  
Hebrew Congregation  
National Council of Jewish Women  
Ner Tamid Congregation  
Rabbinical Council of America  
Religious Zionists of America  
Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation  
Shomrei Eemunah Congregation  
Simon E. Sobeloff Jewish Law Society  
Suburban Orthodox Congregation  
Temple Beth Shalom  
Temple Isaiah  
Zionist Organization of America  
Baltimore District

## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

### Senate Bill 920- Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations

### Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee – March 15, 2022 SUPPORT

**Background:** Senate Bill 920, (SB920) would create presumptive eligibility for the subsidy under the the Child Care Scholarship Program. An individual would be required to certify that they meet the eligibility requirements of the subsidy and submit an electronic form to the department. The individual would automatically receive the subsidy after they submit the form. They would have 15 days to fill out the full application, and would continue to receive the subsidy until the department makes an eligibility determination. Further, SB920 would require that no copay be paid by subsidy recipients who participate in certain voucher and assistance programs.

**Written Comments:** The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) represents that Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and all its agencies, including Jewish Community Services (JCS). JCS provides financial support services to people in need, including linking them with Federal, State and Local benefits and programs. Many parents must make the hard choice between entering the workforce and affording child care. This disproportionately affects minorities, women and single parents.

Maryland has one of the highest costs (ranked number 7) of child care in the country, averaging over \$15,000 a year for infant care.<sup>1</sup> This is 67% of a minimum wage workers annual salary. The Child Care Scholarship Program is a lifesaver for low-income working parents, however, the program, as currently administered makes it almost impossible for those trying to get back into the workforce because it requires proof of employment or job training before someone is eligible. This means that someone would need to find child care and afford that child care before starting employment. The reforms in SB920 would help more people be eligible for the subsidy and remove the current barriers.

With this in mind, the Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report on SB920.

***The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.***

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.epi.org/child-care-costs-in-the-united-states/#/MD>



# **SB920 King Sponsor Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Senator Nancy King

Position: FAV

Senate Bill 920 addresses all of these barriers to receiving the Child Care Scholarship by:

**1. Establishing Presumptive Eligibility**

- If a family certifies that they are eligible, then the family is “presumed” eligible for the Maryland the child care scholarship and can immediately enroll their children in care while the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) reviews their paperwork and formal approval is pending.
- To continue receiving a subsidy a family will complete the formal application for the child care scholarship within 15 days of the initial certification form.

**2. Expanding “Express Lane” & Dual Eligibility**

- Maryland families who qualify for Temporary Cash Assistance and Supplemental Security Income automatically qualify for the child care scholarship. The bill will expand that automatic access to additional benefits like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, housing vouchers, and Guaranteed Access.

**3. Creating a Provider Payment Timeline**

- MSDE will be required to pay child care providers participating in the child care scholarship program within 10 business days of receiving a full invoice.

**4. Simplifying the Child Care Scholarship Application**

- MSDE will be required to work with national experts to review, update, streamline, and simplify the child care scholarship application to ensure it is accessible, clear, and easily completed by all families.

**5. Terminating Requirement for Child Support to Receive Child Care Scholarship**

- Maryland will no longer require an individual to pursue or receive child care support payments or apply for services from a child support agency to be eligible for a child care scholarship.

Securing timely child care assistance is critical for families who are trying to get into or remain in the workforce and timely payments are critical for providers who accept placements from families in the scholarship program. This legislation will simplify and accelerate the process for the Child Care Scholarship and so I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 920.

NANCY J. KING  
*Legislative District 39*  
Montgomery County

MAJORITY LEADER

Budget and Taxation Committee

*Chair*

Education, Business and  
Administration Subcommittee



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Nancy.King@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR STATEMENT

**Senate Bill 370 – Education – Educational Interpreter – Certification Requirements**

March 15, 2022

Mister Chairman and Members of the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee:

The Maryland Child Care Scholarship Program (formerly known as the Child Care Subsidy Program), provides much needed assistance to families to help defray the cost of child care for low-income working families. Unfortunately, the application process itself is complicated, burdensome, and lengthy preventing many from getting and keeping child care benefits. Each step of the process -- the application, eligibility redetermination process, and reporting of interim changes income and family circumstances -- creates needless barriers for families. With little technical assistance available, families rely on child care providers (increasing their burden), as well as on-line chat rooms and other resources to successfully complete applications.

Often families are forced to provide duplicative information that has already been provided to qualify for other programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), WIC, housing vouchers or Maryland higher education scholarships. These programs have overlapping eligibility requirements, similar application and redetermination processes, and require voluminous amounts of paperwork. It can be overwhelming to provide the necessary information to multiple agencies at multiple times throughout the year to continue receiving essential services.

Once the child care subsidy application is submitted, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has up to 30 days to process the application. If at any time incorrect or incomplete information is submitted by the family, the application is returned and the process starts all over again. At this point, the desired child care slot may not even be available anymore.

A final barrier to receiving timely child care assistance is the requirement that parents collect any court-ordered child support in order to receive benefits. While child support enforcement may provide more resources for the child, the implementation of such a rule is problematic. The policy disproportionately affects and often prevents single-parent families from accessing child care support. Families are faced with many "hoops" to establish parentage, teen parents are less likely to pursue child support, and in many families this will result in one child, but not others, accessing child care.



**Senate Bill 920\_Favorable.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Shamoyia Gardiner

Position: FAV

# TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Testimony to the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

In support of

Senate Bill 920: Child Care Scholarship Program- Alterations (Maryland Child Care Working Families Act)

March 15, 2022

## **Strong Schools Maryland urges a favorable vote on Senate Bill 920: Child Care Scholarship Program- Alterations (Maryland Child Care Working Families Act).**

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future envisions a world-class system of public schools for our state's students. Critical to that system is an entryway to early learning opportunities, including a strong, accessible network of high quality child care offerings.

However, despite the benefits of childcare, this resource has not been readily available to everyone who needs it. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, child care providers were inaccessible mainly due to cost and limited availability. In 2017, a family of three in Maryland living at the poverty level would pay 14% of their income despite the fact that, at the time, federal requirements stated copayments should be no more than 7% of a family's income.<sup>1</sup> Since March 2020, the state has seen 855 fewer childcare providers and there have been more shortages in the workforce partially due to families not having reliable child care.<sup>2</sup>

Senate Bill 920 would:

- Require the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to create a process that would grant presumptive eligibility for a child care scholarship. Granting presumptive eligibility would increase participation in the program and ensure that marginalized communities (those who are not native English speakers, those experiencing poverty, those with developmental disabilities, etc.) have more equitable access to critical early learning and care opportunities; and
- Eschew racist, inequitable policies by prohibiting MSDE from requiring that a parent pursue/receive child support as a criteria for accessing the benefit.

High quality child care is the foundation to student success in a world class education system. Senate Bill 920 makes equitable access to the Child Care Scholarship Program a priority and is in alignment with the vision of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Strong Schools Maryland urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 920.

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*If you have questions or requests for additional information, you can email:*

Shamoyia Gardiner

<sup>1</sup> Rachel Baye, "Maryland Poor Getting Little Help on Childcare", 2017, <https://www.wypr.org/wypr-news/2017-11-22/maryland-poor-get-little-help-on-childcare>

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Shwe, "Lawmakers Tout Bills to Support Providers and Make Child Care More Affordable, 2022, <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2022/02/11/lawmakers-tout-bills-to-support-providers-and-make-child-care-more-affordable/>

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# **SEIU Local 500 - SB 920 Child Care Scholarship Pro**

Uploaded by: Travis Simon

Position: FAV



**Hearing Testimony March 15, 2022**  
**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs**  
**Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC**

**Senate Bill 920: Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program - Alterations**

**SUPPORT**

On behalf of the 20,000 working people in our region represented by SEIU Local 500, we offer our strong support for **Senate Bill 920**. Our union represents the support staff at the Montgomery County Public School system, Family Child Care Providers, Faculty at institutions of higher education, staff at non-profits, and many other working people across the region.

As the union for family child care providers across the state, we would like to thank Senator King for her steadfast leadership on issues impacting the child care community and working families. SB 920 would require the State Department of Education to pay child care providers within 10 days of receipt of an invoice. This will address the unstable income providers have faced due to delays or non-payments from the Child Care Scholarship (Maryland State Childcare Association). Delayed payments or non-payments have been a consistent issue that our members face throughout the state. The inconsistent payments from the state have forced many Family Child Care providers to leave the industry. Their departure from providing child care has resulted in fewer family child care centers from being open and providing accessible child care for that would allow workers to return to the workforce.

Our working members often have children at home, and require access to child care so that they can fully focus on their duties in the workplace. It is essential that our members are not forced to choose between their careers and their children's safety, so ensuring access to child care, especially for our low-income members, is of the utmost importance.

Low-income families have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in regards to access to child care. According to the Maryland State Childcare Association, programs serving mostly higher-income families were almost twice as likely as those serving low-income families to report being physically open. Even federally-funded after-school programs in high-poverty neighborhoods were more likely to be closed during the first summer of the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing cost and availability issues, leading to child care deserts in many areas across the state.

Now is the time to make sure our low-income members do not continue to be left behind. Awarding a subsidy that eliminates a copay for individuals involved in the Child Care Scholarship Program allows increased access to child care services for the families that need it most. Ensuring individuals who receive this subsidy are in education or career training programs and who receive benefits like WIC, SNAP, federal housing choice voucher, guaranteed access grant, supplemental security income benefits or temporary cash

**Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC**  
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**Pia Morrison, President**



assistance will allow these families greater opportunity for economic, familial, and career-related prosperity.

SB 920 promises to address the disparities in access to child care for low-income families while relieving providers of the stress that comes with an unstable income. **For these reasons, SEIU Local 500 supports this legislation.**

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

# **SB 920 - SWA - Early Childhood Development – Child**

Uploaded by: Ary Amerikaner

Position: FWA



**Mohammed Choudhury**  
State Superintendent of Schools

<b>BILL:</b>	Senate Bill 920	<b>DATE:</b>	March 15, 2022
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations	<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
<b>POSITION:</b>	Support with Amendments		
<b>CONTACT:</b>	Ary Amerikaner 410-767-0090 <a href="mailto:ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov">ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov</a>		

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) supports **Senate Bill 920 – Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations**, which would make significant changes to the Child Care Scholarship Program, including establishing a process for granting presumptive eligibility under the Child Care Scholarship Program. MSDE appreciates the collaborative efforts made by the authors of the legislation and the opportunity to provide input throughout the process.

Expediting access to child care for vulnerable families is a laudable goal and one that the MSDE fully supports. It is critical, however, that we pursue this in a manner that does not jeopardize critical federal funds nor lead to the MSDE acting as a collections agency, seeking to recoup funds paid to providers serving families ultimately deemed ineligible. Therefore, MSDE requests that the committee consider the following amendments:

1. Establish a State fund to pay for childcare services provided to families found to be ineligible. After consultation with the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Care, it is clear that neither (a) federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) funds nor (b) state funds used as “matching” funds within the CCDF program are allowed to be used to pay for child care for a child whose parents or guardians are found to be ineligible. To ensure that Maryland does not run afoul of these rules, the State will need to be prepared to pay for the childcare services provided to any families that are ultimately found to be ineligible;
2. Adjust the timeline by replacing August, 2022 with July 1, 2023. This allows a new state funding stream to be appropriated in FY24 before the program begins and provides adequate time to build and implement presumptive eligibility programming in a thoughtful, strategic way; and
3. Add language making clear that MSDE is not to recover funds paid to providers to serve families ultimately deemed ineligible, and instead is to reassign these costs from CCDF funds to the state funds dedicated for this purpose.



Additionally, because MSDE does not directly pay providers, MSDE requests a technical amendment recognizing the multiple agencies involved in issuing payments to providers under the scholarship program:

4. On page 3, please replace current (G) with the following text, consulting with the Comptroller's office to identify the appropriate number of days in (H):

“(G) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROCESS A CHILD CARE PROVIDER’S CORRECTLY SUBMITTED INVOICE AND TRANSMIT THE PAYMENT TO THE COMPTROLLER WITHIN 10 DAYS AFTER THE DATE ON WHICH THE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES AN INVOICE FROM A CHILD CARE PROVIDER.

(H) THE COMPTROLLER SHALL PAY THE PROVIDER WITHIN [#] DAYS AFTER THE DATE ON WHICH THE DEPARTMENT TRANSMITS SUCH PAYMENT UNDER (G).”

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate SB 920. Please contact Ary Amerikaner, at 410-767-0090, or [ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov](mailto:ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov), for any additional information.

**SB0920.pdf**

Uploaded by: Martha Holleman

Position: FWA



Strategic  
Thinking for  
SOCIAL  
CHANGE

March 14, 2022

Written Testimony submitted by Martha Holleman, MPP in support of SB 920 with amendments

Thank you to the members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee, to Chairman Pinsky, to Vice Chair Kagan, and to Senator King for her introduction of this most important legislation.

I am the author of a recent report published by the Abell Foundation entitled “Child Care After COVID: Equity, efficiency, and effectiveness in the financing and delivery of child care in Baltimore and Maryland” ([https://abell.org/sites/default/files/files/2021\\_Abell\\_child%20care%20report\\_FINAL2-web.pdf](https://abell.org/sites/default/files/files/2021_Abell_child%20care%20report_FINAL2-web.pdf)). This paper highlighted some of the very challenges Senate Bill 920 is designed to address and advocated for streamlining the application process and implementing presumptive eligibility. To quote from the findings:

*The Maryland Child Care Scholarship is the most critical source for helping cover child care tuition and is a powerful policy tool for supporting families—though both providers and families report significant difficulty in accessing and retaining the subsidy. By policy, applications are to be reviewed and a determination of eligibility is to be made within 30 days. In practice, this process can take months and often includes multiple re-submissions.*

*Providers and advocates urge streamlining the application process for the Child Care Scholarship; making eligibility presumptive for those applying for the suite of programs designed to support families with children—including WIC, SNAP, TANF, TCA, and the Maryland Child Care Scholarship—where families would be approved for all programs for which they are eligible, based on their application to any one program; and expanding staffing, outreach, and support to let families know of the benefits for which they are eligible and how to access them.*

In addition to addressing bureaucratic impediments and utilizing presumptive eligibility, the paper also recommends that Maryland move quickly to:

- Develop a data-driven, equity-focused process for setting child care subsidy rates that identifies the real cost of care; evens out differences across regions; and addresses policy goals such as pay equity, program quality, and staff training and development. Setting public subsidy based on the private market – as Maryland currently does with the Child Care Scholarship -- disadvantages providers located in low-wealth communities and bakes in existing inequities.
- Pay providers based on enrollment, not attendance, to stabilize these critical small businesses and allow providers to operate with some level of certainty about their income, and
- Eliminate co-pays for families with incomes below the state median.

Future versions of the bill could also address these concerns and opportunities – better supporting Maryland’s families and child care providers now and putting concerns about equity front and center.