



Testimony Concerning HB 1382

Children – Family Child Care Homes and the Chief Medical Examiner – Use of Video Recording Devices and Reports (Bexley’s Law)

Submitted to the House Health and Government Operations Committee

March 3, 2022

Position: Oppose

The Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland (the Alliance) is a collaborative network of national, state and local partners working to advance the field of family child care for the benefit of family child care providers, children, families, local communities and the State of Maryland. We strongly support legislation and regulations that promote safe, high quality family child care, but we do not believe a legal mandate requiring video recording devices in every room of a home used for family child care is either a reasonable or an affordable means to increase the safety of children.

The layout of a family child care home is not standardized. Some homes may be set up with all activities, including learning, playing, eating and sleeping in one room, but most homes use many rooms: a living room or playroom for learning and playing, a kitchen for food preparation, a dining room for serving meals and bedrooms for napping. HB 1382 requires video recording devices to record “all areas of each room in the home where child care is provided.” (page 2, lines 12-13) In a room with a shelving unit or a couch, this provision could require multiple devices in a single room. The cost of multiple recording devices plus the cloud storage may be a disincentive for many providers to become or remain licensed, and the knowledge required to install and maintain the technology, along with concerns for the privacy of the children in care, their families and the provider’s own family may be a further disincentive.

Family child care providers are early childhood education professionals who already have stringent requirements to protect the safety and promote the development and learning of the children in their care. Preservice requirements include:

- extensive training on topics including safe sleeping arrangements and appropriate supervision,
- criminal background checks and child protective services record checks for all adults working or living in the family child care home, and
- inspections by state child care licensing staff and local officials including the fire marshal, health department and zoning.

Requirements to maintain a license include additional annual training and annual unannounced inspections.

The Alliance strongly opposes HB 1382 as an unreasonable burden on family child care providers that does not make family child care substantially safer for children, and therefore we ask you to give it an unfavorable report.