

March 2, 2022

**Testimony Concerning Support for:
HB 933 Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations (Maryland Child Care Working Families Act)
HB 993 Child Care Capital Support Revolving Loan Fund – Established
HB 995 Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations
HB 1100 – Child Care Providers and Employees – Bonuses**

Submitted to the House Committee on Ways and Means

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

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, and Prince George's County is no exception. I am no exception. In the last two years, I have experienced families having no child care, due to the delay in recertification. A few families had to complete the application out several times, due to the application being over 30 days, and the parent was unable to get a response back re: the status of their application.

I am a registered provider in P.G. County for over 13 years. I participate in the Maryland Excels on level 3 and is working on my Accreditation to further my Maryland Excels level. Once upon a time, I had 90 percent or greater, were scholarships families. Currently, I'm down to three families. I am licensed for eight children, and I'm currently down to 4 children and one will be leaving in a few weeks due to their age.

In Prince George's County, area child care providers like me are experiencing deep challenges with funding/finances, staffing and enrollment which are all totally intertwined. The stabilization funds offered in 2021 were an important step. There is more to be done.

We need help rebuilding our businesses and keeping our quality, relationship-based practices strong, so we can be there for working parents and for young children. The quality of child care, and the experience of the birth-to-five years, are crucial to school readiness and supporting working families.

It would be greatly appreciated if we/child care providers could receive bonuses for ourselves and our substitutes.

We must continue to take steps to stabilize the child care sector and the well-being of people who work in child care, and we must also rebuild child care better than before.

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.