



**Additional Testimony from Child Care Providers Concerning HB 995 “Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations”  
Submitted to the House Ways & Means Committee  
March 4, 2022**

Position: **SUPPORT**

*In addition to our organizational testimony in support of HB 995, 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 HB 995.*

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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*