

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 childcare system in Maryland.**

Childcare providers across the nation continue to struggle as they recover during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Childcare 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, we have experienced (low enrollment and families that can't afford to pay the tuition because their hours on their job have been decrease.)

Insert some things about you/your program, for instance:

- We are a licensed childcare center
- We are currently active in Maryland Excels
- We accept scholarship/subsidy families who pay with scholarship/subsidy
- Your licensed capacity is 77 and we have 56 enrolled now. We have a lot of part time parents.
- Our staff has been cut in half. We lost our second location due to the pandemic.

In Prince George's County, area childcare 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.

Insert your own ideas about what a difference it would make to have...

- Access to hiring bonuses for new staff would have with the on-boarding process and give the newly hire individual an opportunity to get started without a lot of out-of-pocket cost which they might not have.
- Access to a revolving loan fund to make changes to your program's physical spaces, with 5 years to repay would benefit our program in ways that would impact the children growth and safety.
- Families with access to presumptive eligibility for childcare scholarship can enroll their children without fear of having to lose a new job while waiting on approval. This bill will also help

childcare programs by receiving payment for providing care during the approval time of the voucher even if the parent doesn't get approved.

- Payment from MSDE 10 days after you invoice them is a necessity to budget and plan. (
- Families relieved from the burden of compliance with child support should have in some cases, but not all. Only when they are experiences challenges that will prevent them from starting a new job.
- Families relieved from co pays when they experience challenges, with payment from MSDE instead is a very good idea. I believe this is a great idea. Parent may really be in a financial hardship.
- Stronger family eligibility policies and practices so that more families have choices and access to the childcare programs that meet their needs. I agree totally.

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

Thank you for your leadership for our community. Together we can help childcare 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.