

Hello Delegate Wells and Ways and Means Committee Members,

My name is Heather Moyer and I am a parent who resides in your district.

I am writing to ask that you vote in favor of HB376 to establish an Outdoor Preschool Licensing pilot. Here are a few of the reasons why I urge you to support the bill:

Children from low-income communities and those with special needs do not have equitable access to State scholarships or special education services and are cut off from the benefits of nature-based early childhood education because immersive outdoor preschools currently cannot be licensed; A staggering number of child care programs in Maryland have closed during the covid-19 pandemic leaving a shortage of options for families. Outdoor preschools offer an alternative form of child care at a time when many families seek the physical and mental health benefits of being outdoors; and Outdoor preschools promote the skills and values that lead to environmental literacy, which supports goals of the Maryland Partnership For Children In Nature and the K-12 Environmental Literacy Standards required for graduation in Maryland.

I know my daughter has loved and found great use for the times we've spent outside teaching her about nature - oftentimes without us teaching her anything, just her exploring and enjoying the outdoors is beneficial too!

Thank you for your time and consideration of HB376. I hope that you will support this important effort and vote in favor of HB376!

Sincerely,

Heather Moyer

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