

SB873 - Child Care Program Establishment Testimony

Uploaded by: Abigail Snyder

Position: FAV

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Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation
Shomrei Emunah Congregation
Suburban Orthodox Congregation
Temple Beth Shalom
Temple Isaiah
Zionist Organization of America
 Baltimore District

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

**Senate Bill 873 - Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee – February 22, 2023**

SUPPORT

Background: SB873 would require an annual budget appropriation to establish and maintain the Child Care Provider Stabilization Program in the State Department of Education. Each Child Care Provider would receive \$2,500 per month if they have children enrolled that are eligible under the program or \$300 if they do not have children enrolled that are eligible under the program.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) represents that Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and all of its agencies, including the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Baltimore (JCC's). The JCC's run two early childhood centers, one of which was closed for a large part of 2020 due to the pandemic. The economic impact has been great for not only our JCC's but for several other ECC's in the Jewish community, including centers attached to our synagogues. To give a snapshot of the impact, the Owings Mills JCC in FY20 (June 19-July 20) had a revenue of \$1.9 million, whereas the projected revenue for FY21 is \$1.4 million (with the help of the Federal PPP). 16% of childcare centers in our state had closed by January 2021 and by November 2021 751 centers had closed. The remaining ECCs in our community, as well as others across the State of Maryland, are still working to recover from the pandemic losses.

Now that the COVID pandemic is relatively behind us and parents/guardians are expected to physically go back to the office, many are once again relying on childcare centers. This is particularly true for women and single parents who will be forced out of the workforce if there is no readily available childcare. Providing financial support to childcare providers should be an instrumental part of our state's focus as we continue to navigate the post-pandemic workforce expectations.

With this in mind, the Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report of SB873.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies, and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

BALTIMORE JEWISH COUNCIL

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Member of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Baltimore Jewish Council is an agency of The Associated

 **The Associated**
Jewish Federation of Baltimore

PGCRC - testimony-SB-873-2 February 2023 pdf.pdf

Uploaded by: Audrey Pabs-Garnon

Position: FAV

February 21, 2023

**Testimony Concerning SB 873:
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established”**

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment

**Audrey Pabs-Garnon
Hopes & Dreams Infant Toddler Center
5307 Powhatan Road, Riverdale, MD 20737
301.699.7886
hopesanddreams2002@gmail.com**

Child care providers are in crisis, and so are families, and Prince George’s County is no exception. I am no exception.

SB 873 calls for monthly payments to licensed child care providers who are willing and able to enroll children who receive a subsidy through the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). I urge your support for this legislation.

Through this bill, I could receive as much as \$2,500 per month to be used for cleaning and food supplies, early childhood educator wages, and the ongoing expenses of running my program and being available to the families counting on me so that they can go to work. I thank Senator Washington for leading this bill and for seeing what it takes to do this every day.

I am a licensed Child Care Center in Riverdale, Prince George’s County, Maryland. I have been in business for over 30 years and was one of the few Essential Personnel Child Care [EPCC] centers that remained open throughout the pandemic. I have in the past, currently have and am willing and able to enroll families who pay with scholarship/subsidy. I am an infant toddler center licensed for 25 children. At the moment I have 12 children enrolled.

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 and 2022 were an important step. There is more to be done.

An additional \$2500 per month would enable me to offer better benefits to the staff, thereby increasing the quality of my workforce. This in turn would make a difference in my ability to consistently be there for children and their working parents.

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 formative birth-to-five years are crucial to school readiness and supporting working families.

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.

The child care crisis is not over in Maryland. Thank you for your leadership and your support for child care through recent General Assembly sessions. There’s more to do and we can do it together! THANK YOU for supporting SB 873!

Perfect Harmony Testimony .pdf

Uploaded by: Bonita Boone

Position: FAV

February 21, 2023

**Testimony Concerning SB 873:
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established”**

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment

Bonita Boone
Perfect Harmony II
6379 Suitland RD Suitland MD 20746
301-735-0014
BonitaBoone@icloud.com

Child care providers are in crisis, and so are families, and Prince George’s County is no exception. I am no exception.

SB 873 calls for monthly payments to licensed child care providers who are willing and able to enroll children who receive a subsidy through the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). I urge your support for this legislation.

Through this bill, I could receive as much as \$2,500 per month to be used for cleaning and food supplies, early childhood educator wages, and the ongoing expenses of running my program and being available to the families counting on me so that they can go to work. I thank Senator Washington for leading this bill and for seeing what it takes to do this every day.

- Perfect Harmony is a licensed child care – 251484
- Our license capacity is 56 and currently have 35 enrolled children
- We are willing and currently enroll families who pay with the child care scholarship
- We have 23 children using the child care scholarship

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 and 2022 were an important step. There is more to be done.

The proposed additional \$2500 per month in state stabilization grant funding would great help my program by

- Allowing me to increase my staff’s pay. Currently, I am only able to pay them at minimum wage or slightly above minimum wage. It is difficult to pay more without increasing parent cost, that most parents struggle to pay without assistance.
- Allowing me to provide my staff bonuses. My staff have endured during the pandemic which included reduced hours, no pay increases and the stress of them working during the pandemic. I lost a few employees as a result. The ones that remained deserve bonus for all they done.
- I had to subsidize several families weekly tuition, that were not eligible for the child care scholarship, but still have financial hardship to pay for child care. The \$2500 will help to offset that cost.
- Allowing me to make safety repairs to our playground. It has been difficult to address capital repairs while struggling to pay fair wages and subsidizing families’ tuitions, and the wear and tear on our fence and playground equipment is beginning to become a safety concern and affecting student experience.

- Allowing me to promote our center so enrollment can return to pre-covid levels. Prior to covid, Perfect Harmony was at maximum capacity of 56 and has had difficulty reaching families to achieve our current enrollment of 35.

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.

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.

The child care crisis is not over in Maryland. Thank you for your leadership and your support for child care through recent General Assembly sessions. There's more to do and we can do it together. Thank you for supporting SB 873.

SB0873-EEE_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Brianna January

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 873

Child Care Provider Stabilization Program - Established

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment
and Budget and Taxation Committees

Date: February 22, 2023

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 873. This bill would provide additional support to licensed child care providers throughout Maryland. It comes at a time when child care, community, and county resources are pushed to their brink.

The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated the shortage of licensed child care providers to support the safe care of Maryland's kids and support the state's working families. Maryland does not currently have enough licensed providers to meet the needs of such families balancing work, child care, and the ongoing pandemic, as many providers had to cease operation due to public health risk and financial instability associated with COVID-19. Those providers that remain in operation are struggling to stay afloat, and many are unable to provide reliable child care.

SB 873 helps address these issues. The bill would establish a Child Care Provider Stabilization Program and Stability Fund to support providers throughout the state. The fund would provide a monthly stipend to providers to support their operations, capital projects, and to offset other expenses. Impactfully, the monthly stipend would be based on the number of children a provider cares for that receive a child care subsidy from the State.

While counties have creatively addressed the needs of reliable and safe child care, they welcome increased State contribution to stabilize the industry. County departments of parks and recreation, for example, have provided after school and interactive programming, and county governments have partnered with local nonprofits around the state to lessen the impact of Maryland's child care crisis. However, these programs do not take the place of longer-term and dedicated child care providers.

Consistent and safe child care is critical for economic development, successful families and communities, and the development of children. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** SB 873 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.

sb0873F.pdf

Uploaded by: Christina Peusch

Position: FAV

SENATE BILL 873

F5, O4

3lr2438
CF HB 868

By: **Senator M. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2023

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment and Budget and Taxation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Child Care Provider Stabilization Program in the State
4 Department of Education to provide stability funding to eligible child care providers;
5 and generally relating to the establishment of the Child Care Provider Stabilization
6 Program.

7 BY adding to
8 Article – Education
9 Section 9.5–117
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2022 Replacement Volume)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Education**

15 **9.5–117.**

16 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
17 INDICATED.

18 (2) “CCS PROGRAM” MEANS THE CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP
19 PROGRAM UNDER § 9.5–113 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

20 (3) “ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER” MEANS A CHILD CARE
21 PROVIDER THAT:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **(I) POSSESSES A CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OR LICENSE**
2 **THAT IS CURRENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO ANY PENDING REGULATORY ACTION,**
3 **INCLUDING REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION; AND**

4 **(II) SIGNS AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT**
5 **INDICATING THE CHILD CARE PROVIDER IS WILLING AND ABLE TO ENROLL**
6 **CHILDREN WHO RECEIVE A SUBSIDY UNDER THE CCS PROGRAM.**

7 **(4) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE CHILD CARE PROVIDER STABILIZATION**
8 **PROGRAM.**

9 **(5) "STABILITY FUNDING" MEANS FUNDING PROVIDED UNDER THE**
10 **PROGRAM TO AN ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER THAT MAY BE USED ONLY FOR:**

11 **(I) CLEANING AND FOOD SUPPLIES THAT ARE USED DIRECTLY**
12 **IN THE PROVISION OF CHILD CARE;**

13 **(II) EMPLOYEE WAGES, INCLUDING BONUSES;**

14 **(III) OFFSETTING EXPENSES PAID BY SUBSIDIZED AND**
15 **UNSUBSIDIZED CLIENTS;**

16 **(IV) PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS USED TO PROMOTE THE CHILD**
17 **CARE PROVIDER'S PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM; AND**

18 **(V) ANY OTHER EXPENSES DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE**
19 **PROVISION OF CHILD CARE, INCLUDING CAPITAL PROJECTS.**

20 **(B) (1) THERE IS A CHILD CARE PROVIDER STABILIZATION PROGRAM IN**
21 **THE DEPARTMENT.**

22 **(2) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE STABILITY**
23 **FUNDING TO ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDERS IN THE STATE.**

24 **(C) SUBJECT TO THE LIMITATIONS OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT**
25 **SHALL:**

26 **(1) DEVELOP APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND A PROCESS TO AWARD**
27 **STABILITY FUNDING TO ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDERS;**

28 **(2) EACH MONTH, DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF EACH STABILITY**
29 **FUNDING AWARD FOR EACH ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER IN ACCORDANCE WITH**
30 **SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION; AND**

1 **(3) AWARD STABILITY FUNDING ON A MONTHLY BASIS TO EACH**
2 **ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER THAT APPLIES AND MAINTAINS ELIGIBILITY AS**
3 **REQUIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT.**

4 **(D) THE AMOUNT OF EACH MONTHLY STABILITY FUNDING AWARD FOR**
5 **EACH ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER SHALL BE:**

6 **(1) \$2,500 FOR AN ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER THAT HAS**
7 **ENROLLED CHILDREN WHO RECEIVE A SUBSIDY UNDER THE CCS PROGRAM AS**
8 **FOLLOWS:**

9 **(I) ONE CHILD ENROLLED DURING THE IMMEDIATELY**
10 **PRECEDING MONTH;**

11 **(II) TWO CHILDREN ENROLLED DURING 2 OF THE 3**
12 **IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING MONTHS; OR**

13 **(III) FOUR CHILDREN ENROLLED DURING 4 OF THE 6**
14 **IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING MONTHS; OR**

15 **(2) \$300 FOR AN ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER THAT DOES NOT**
16 **MEET THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER ITEM (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION.**

17 **(E) (1) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER,**
18 **THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION**
19 **FOR THE PROGRAM IN AN AMOUNT SUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE STABILITY FUNDING TO**
20 **ALL ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.**

21 **(2) THE FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE**
22 **SUPPLEMENTAL TO, AND MAY NOT SUPPLANT, FUNDS OTHERWISE AVAILABLE FOR:**

23 **(I) CHILD CARE PROVIDERS THAT ENROLL CHILDREN WHO**
24 **RECEIVE A SUBSIDY UNDER THE CCS PROGRAM; AND**

25 **(II) CHILDREN WHO RECEIVE A SUBSIDY UNDER THE CCS**
26 **PROGRAM.**

27 **(F) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS**
28 **SECTION.**

29 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
30 1, 2023.

SB 873 _MFN_FAV_Macsherry.pdf

Uploaded by: Clinton Macsherry

Position: FAV



Testimony Concerning SB 873
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program - Established”
Submitted to the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 22, 2023

Position: Favorable

Maryland Family Network (MFN) supports SB 873, which would establish Child Care Provider Stabilization (CCPS) funding for providers who participate in the State’s Child Care Scholarship Program. CCPS would at long last give those Maryland child care programs that are committed to serving low- to moderate-income working families the firm financial footing they need to play their indispensable role in our economy.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education, as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. We have been active in state and federal debates on child care policy and are strongly committed to ensuring that children, along with their parents, have access to high-quality, affordable programs and educational opportunities.

Child care providers have been called “the workforce behind the workforce.” Their mostly small businesses—which play a preeminent role in enabling parents to earn and children to learn—are struggling for their survival. During the first years of the pandemic, approximately 750 child care programs closed permanently. Others have remained open but face considerably higher expenses associated with health protocols, intensive sanitation, and—crucially—staffing shortages.

To be sure, although the pandemic exacerbated matters, major challenges to financial stability have long bedeviled the child care sector. As Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen has noted, “child care is a textbook example of a broken market.” The slow-motion collapse of child care will pose enormous barriers to workforce engagement and a robust economy. We commend Maryland’s efforts to support providers up to this point. But they have been insufficient to meet the ongoing challenges that providers face.

CCPS funding offers a path forward that can stabilize the supply of child care programs, improve access and affordability, enable child care businesses and workers to prosper, and ensure that every child has a bright future. Enactment will mean that today’s workforce is strong, tomorrow’s workforce can grow, and our economy can not only overcome current challenges but can thrive in the years to come.

MFN respectfully urges the Committee’s favorable consideration of SB 873.

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Uploaded by: Deborah Williams

Position: FAV

February 21, 2023

**Testimony Concerning SB 873:
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established”**

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment

Deborah A. Williams
Jaycees Early Learning Center
7624 Lanham Lane Fort Washington, Maryland 20744
(301) 248-2185
jckidcare@verizon.net

Child care providers are in crisis, and so are families, and Prince George’s County is no exception. I am no exception.

SB 873 calls for monthly payments to licensed child care providers who are willing and able to enroll children who receive a subsidy through the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). I urge your support for this legislation.

Through this bill, I could receive as much as \$2,500 per month to be used for cleaning and food supplies, early childhood educator wages, and the ongoing expenses of running my program and being available to the families counting on me so that they can go to work. I thank Senator Washington for leading this bill and for seeing what it takes to do this every day.

- We are a licensed program in compliance with the Office of Child Care Regulations
- Presently we have families with scholarships enrolled in our program and we encourage all our parents to apply for the childcare scholarship.
- The capacity of our program is 117 and we presently have 68 enrolled.

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 and 2022 were an important step. There is more to be done.

An additional \$2500 per month in stabilization grant funding would make it possible for us to continue to provide quality childcare for our families, keep adequate supplies, pay for field trips for our children and an appreciation bonus for our staff.

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.

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.

The child care crisis is not over in Maryland. Thank you for your leadership and your support for child care through recent General Assembly sessions. There’s more to do and we can do it together. Thank you for supporting SB 873.

BaltimoreCounty_FAV_SB0873.pdf

Uploaded by: Elisabeth Sachs

Position: FAV



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

JENNIFER AIOSA
Director of Government Affairs

AMANDA KONTZ CARR
Legislative Officer

JOSHUA M. GREENBERG
Associate Director of Government Affairs

BILL NO.: **SB 873**

TITLE: **Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established**

SPONSOR: **Senator Washington**

COMMITTEE: **Education, Energy, and the Environment**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: **February 23, 2023**

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 873 – Child Care Provider Stabilization Program - Established. This legislation would establish the Child Care Provider Stabilization Program.

Licensed childcare providers are critical resources for working families across the State of Maryland. Many parents rely on child care professionals to care for their children during the day that allows children to learn and socialize in a safe environment while they work. The COVID-19 pandemic severely destabilized the childcare arena, leaving many providers in financial distress and many parents without access to affordable child care options. In the wake of the pandemic, Baltimore County allocated \$7 million in subsidies to cover the cost of childcare services for many families, and opened academic support centers to create new options for full-day, in-person childcare. Many licensed providers still in operation, however, face a long recovery ahead.

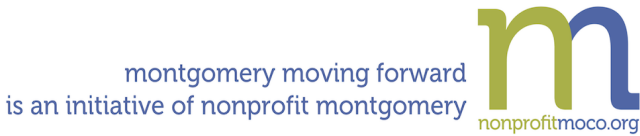
Senate Bill 873 would provide much-needed assistance to childcare providers. Under this bill, providers can receive stability funding based on the number of children enrolled in the past 1-6 months. By allocating enhanced subsidies for providers that enroll recipients of Child Care Scholarship funds, this legislation incentivizes providers to offer care to low-income families who depend on state assistance to secure these vital services.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 873. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.

MMF-Education, Energy, and the Environment-SB873 S

Uploaded by: Farah Nageer-Kanthor

Position: FAV



February 21, 2023

Subject: **Support for SB873, Child Care Provider Stabilization Program - Established**

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

On behalf of Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) and the entire Nonprofit Montgomery organization, we write in support of **Support for SB873, Child Care Provider Stabilization Program - Established**.

We are grateful for Senator Washington's leadership and advocacy for the child care sector and the support by the entire Maryland General Assembly for your work on behalf of child care providers during the COVID pandemic to the present time. Your continued support and recognition of the essential role of the child care sector to our state's economic success is invaluable as we work together to create a more equitable and resilient early care and education system in Maryland.

The essential stabilization support provided under SB873 remains urgently needed by child care providers to support the day-to-day operations of child care programs; their staff, many of whom are women of color; and the families they serve with high quality care. Without Child Care Provider Stabilization Programs like SB873, most child care businesses would not survive. In addition to the core elements included in SB873, it is also critical that MSDE make payments in a timely fashion to stabilize the sector with urgent and efficient measures. This program will continue to provide a lifeline for struggling child care businesses and can also serve as a model for other states.

—

Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) is a collective impact initiative of [Nonprofit Montgomery](https://www.nonprofitmoco.org/). We work with partners across sectors to effect systems-wide change on issues affecting all county residents. MMF convenes the [Early Care and Education Workforce Advocacy Coalition](https://www.nonprofitmoco.org/early-care-and-education-workforce-advocacy-coalition/). The Coalition is a regional public-private coalition of 50+ early care and education leaders and advocates from the business, education, public, philanthropic, and nonprofit sectors that work collaboratively with state elected partners to reduce barriers to quality child care and education and create equitable processes, practices, and pathways for children, their caregivers, and the child care workforce across the state of Maryland.

We are eager to continue to work in partnership with your committee to ensure the full recovery, resilience, and sustainability of the early care and education sector across our state. Early care and education is an economic and social justice imperative and a pillar of Maryland's economy. **We urge you to give SB873 a favorable report.**

Sincerely,

Lavontte Chatmon
Executive Director, Nonprofit Montgomery

MD Catholic Conference_SB 873_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: FAV



**MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE**

February 22, 2023

**Senate Bill 873
Child Care Stabilization Grant Program – Established**

**Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee**

Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in SUPPORT to Senate Bill 873. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 873 would create the Child Care Stabilization Grant Program to provide financial support in the form of monthly stability funding awards to licensed child care providers. This program would allow funds to be spent on: 1.) cleaning and food supplies that are used directly in the provision of child care, 2.) employee wages, including bonuses, 3.) offsetting expenses paid by subsidized and unsubsidized clients, 4.) promotional materials used to promote the child care provider's program and curriculum, and 5.) any other expenses directly related to the provision of child care, including capital projects.

This grant program would provide much needed support to a vital and essential sector of Marylanders' everyday lives. During the coronavirus pandemic, hundreds of providers were forced to close their doors, leading to less options for child care access for working families. Since that time, the access to quality child care has been at the forefront of concerns surrounding early childhood care and education. This bill would greatly assist Maryland child care providers at risk of closing due to financial hardship.

Child Care is an essential component to supporting strong, economically secure families. Additionally, the Church supports this bill as a part of its priority interest in alleviating poverty in our state, as enabling working parents' continued access to child care services is an imperative part of combating poverty. Often, a barrier to sustainable and full-time employment is the availability and affordability of reliable child care services. The State should thus do all it can to support access to child care services for working parents. The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 873.

PGCRC testimony SB-873.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Iverson

Position: FAV

February 21, 2023

**Testimony Concerning SB 873:
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established”**

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment

Jennifer Iverson
Prince George’s Child Resource Center, Inc. (CRC)
9475 Lottsford Road, Suite 202
Largo, MD 20774
jiverson@pgcrc.org

Child care is part of the fabric of our communities - necessary so that parents can confidently go to work and children are in safe, nurturing learning environments. Without accessible child care, our entire economy is threatened. But we can’t have child care without a workforce. We won’t have a child care workforce if they cannot make the professional wage they deserve.

SB 873 calls for monthly payments to licensed child care providers who are willing and able to enroll children who receive a subsidy through the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). This helps families to have access, and child care providers to make enough to pay their bills. I urge your support for this legislation.

Through this bill, early childhood educators could receive as much as \$2,500 per month to be used for cleaning and food supplies, early childhood educator wages, and the ongoing expenses. This bill is well-named – it DOES provide stabilization to child care, and parents are counting on it.

In Prince George’s and Anne Arundel Counties where CRC serves child care providers, there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of child care programs. Child care has always operated with razor thin margins, but the Pandemic made it impossible for many of these small businesses to recover. Now, as the regional Child Care Resource Center, we are working hard to support existing child care programs as well as provide technical assistance and coaching to potential providers. Stabilization funds are one more tool we have to help the provider community!

Child care providers we work with are committed to quality, relationship-based practices strong so that families feel supported and children enter school ready to learn. 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. It makes strong communities for all of us, whether we have young children ourselves or not.

The child care crisis is not over in Maryland. Thank you for your leadership and your support for child care through recent General Assembly sessions. There’s more to do and we can do it together. Thank you for supporting SB 873.



SB 873_MD Center on Economic Policy_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Kali Schumitz

Position: FAV



FEBRUARY 22, 2023

For a Strong Recovery, Maryland Must Strengthen Child Care Infrastructure

Position Statement in Support of Senate Bill 873

Given before the Energy, Education and the Environment and Budget and Taxation Committees

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought overdue attention both to the importance of Maryland's child care infrastructure and to the struggles the industry faces. Public health had necessitated the closing of school buildings and other facilities serving children, and Marylanders name child care as among the most important factors keeping them out of the workforce. At the same time, demand and workforce issues forced nearly 10% of the state's child care centers to close their doors in recent years. **The Maryland Center on Economic Policy supports Senate Bill 873 because it would help struggling child care centers keep the lights on and enable the industry to expand to meet growing need.**

Child care is an essential part of Maryland's economic foundation, enabling parents to pursue their careers confident that their children are in good hands and protecting employers' access to a stable workforce. Yet high costs put child care out of reach for many Marylanders – and these barriers are higher for some than for others:

- As of fall 2020, center-based child care for a child two to five years of age cost more than \$13,000 per year on average, more than in-state tuition at any University System of Maryland institution. Care for infants and one-year-olds cost nearly \$18,000.ⁱ
- High-quality child care is furthest out of reach for parents in low-wage jobs. In Maryland, one in five employed mothers of very young children worked in a low-wage occupation.ⁱⁱ Structural barriers like pay discrimination put child care even further out of reach for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous parents.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Maryland's child care assistance program provides much-needed help to thousands of families, but even after significant improvement still falls short of the federal government's recommended payment rates.^{iv}

While child care has long posed a struggle for working parents, the COVID-19 pandemic has made things worse – especially for women:

- Nationwide, more than half of working parents with children under age 12 reported difficulty handling child care as of October 2020, up from 38% in March 2020.^v
- 57% of working mothers of children under 12 reported difficulty handling child care, compared to 47% of fathers.
- Among parents who are teleworking during the pandemic, mothers are more than twice as likely as fathers to report taking on significant child care responsibilities.
- Working mothers are also more likely than working fathers (including remote and in-person workers) to report cutting their work hours, having their dedication to work questioned, or even missing out on a promotion because of child care responsibilities.

- Among Maryland adults who are not currently employed for reasons other than retirement or health issues, child care responsibilities are the second-most common factor keeping them out of the workforce, according to fall 2021 survey data.^{vi}

At the same time, the pandemic has reduced capacity at child care centers and created new costs on top of rigid existing fixed costs.

- More than 750 child care centers in Maryland have closed since the start of the pandemic, nearly one-tenth of the state’s supply.^{vii}
- Business advocacy groups predict that the loss of child care capacity “could hamper economic recovery for years to come.”^{viii}

Senate Bill 873 would ease the pressure on child care providers by creating a child care stabilization grant program. This program would provide up to \$2,500 per month to licensed child care providers that enroll students who receive a state child care scholarship. This would strengthen the state’s child care scholarship program by creating an incentive to accept students who receive a scholarship, and provide additional resources to child care providers that can help improve pay and benefits. If centers can recruit and retain more experienced and skilled child care workers, this will also benefit the children enrolled in those centers.

- As of 2020, child care workers in Maryland typically took home only \$12.05 per hour, equivalent to just over \$25,000 per year for a full-time worker.^{ix} This is less than two-thirds the amount needed for a single adult with no children to afford a basic living standard in the Baltimore metro area and less than half of a basic living standard for a single adult in the Washington metro area.^x
- Better wages and benefits would help expand the child care workforce. In a survey by the Maryland State Child Care Association, the majority of centers named compensation as their first or second most important barrier holding back recruitment and retention.^{xi} In the same survey, 81% of centers reported at least one staff vacancy and one-in-six reported more than five vacancies. Materials prepared by the association name low wages for child care workers as an important challenge for the industry.^{xii}
- Better wages and benefits could also improve the quality of care by drawing in a more experienced workforce and ensuring workers can give their full attention to the children in their care rather than contending with constant financial anxiety.

Maryland’s child care infrastructure is part of our state’s economic backbone, but that infrastructure today faces serious challenges. Senate Bill 873 would help child care providers build a stronger system for years to come.

For these reasons, the Maryland Center on Economic Policy respectfully asks that the Committees make favorable reports on Senate Bill 873.

Equity Impact Analysis: Senate Bill 873

Bill summary

Senate Bill 873 would create a child care stabilization grant program that provides up to \$2,500 per month to licensed child care providers that enroll students who receive a state child care scholarship. The bill requires an annual appropriation for these programs but does not specify the minimum appropriation.

Background

As of fall 2020, center-based child care for a child two to five years of age cost more than \$13,000 per year on average, more than in-state tuition at any University System of Maryland institution. Care for infants and one-year-olds cost nearly \$18,000.

Maryland's child care scholarship program pays providers less than the amount the federal government calls for. Federal law calls for states to set child care reimbursement rates high enough to cover the cost of care at 75 percent of providers in each state. Payment rates in Maryland have been equal to the 60th percentile of market rates since November 2020.

More than 750 child care centers in Maryland have closed since the start of the pandemic, nearly one-tenth of the state's supply.

Equity Implications

While the high cost of child care is a burden even for relatively well-off families, the burden is greatest for parents in low-wage jobs:

- In Maryland, one in seven employed mothers of very young children worked in a low-wage occupation.
- Because of pay discrimination and other structural barriers, Black, Latinx, and American Indian parents are more likely to take home low wages that put child care out of reach.

Insufficient access to child care places an especially high burden on women, who in most families still carry a greater share of child care responsibilities than men:

- 57% of working mothers of children under 12 reported difficulty handling child care as of October 2020, compared to 47% of fathers.
- Among parents who are teleworking during the pandemic, mothers are more than twice as likely as fathers to report taking on significant child care responsibilities.
- Working mothers are also more likely than working fathers (including remote and in-person workers) to report cutting their work hours, having their dedication to work questioned, or even missing out on a promotion because of child care responsibilities.

Low wages in the child care industry are also a serious equity problem. Among child care workers in Maryland:^{xiii}

- 95% are women
- 55% are workers of color
- 53% are women of color
- 27% are Black
- 16% are Latinx

Impact

Senate Bill 873 would likely **improve racial, gender, and economic equity** in Maryland.

ⁱ "Maryland Family Network Public Policy Handbook 2021–2022," Maryland Family Network, 2021, <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/Public%20Policy%20Handbook%202021-22%20rev.pdf> with calculations by MDCEP.
University System of Maryland FY 2021 tuition data from Maryland FY 2022 budget books. Tuition data for University of Maryland–Baltimore are not reported.

ii *

“NWLC Resource: Mothers of Very Young Children in Low-Wage Occupations,” National Women’s Law Center, 2017, <https://nwlc.org/resources/interactive-map-mothers-very-young-children-low-wage-occupations/>

iii Christopher Meyer, “Budgeting for Opportunity: Maryland’s Workforce Development Policy Can Be a Tool to Remove Barriers and Expand Opportunity,” Maryland Center on Economic Policy, 2021, <http://www.mdeconomy.org/budgeting-for-opportunity-workforce/>

iv Meyer, 2021.

v Ruth Igielnik, “A Rising Share of Working Parents in the U.S. Say it’s Been Difficult to Handle Child Care during the Pandemic,” Pew Research Center, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/01/26/a-rising-share-of-working-parents-in-the-u-s-say-its-been-difficult-to-handle-child-care-during-the-pandemic/>

vi MDCEP analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey weeks 37–39 data (September 1–October 11, 2021).

vii “Caring for Maryland’s Most Important Natural Resource,” Maryland State Child Care Association, 2021, <https://marylandtaxes.gov/RELIEFAct/docs/12-08-2021-MSCCA.pdf>

viii Ashley Duckman, “Access to Childcare Is Critically Important for Employees Returning to Work,” Maryland Chamber of Commerce, 2021, <https://mdchamber.org/access-to-childcare-is-critically-important-for-employees-returning-to-work/>

ix BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Survey data for May 2020.

x Economic Policy Institute Family Budget Calculator, <https://www.epi.org/resources/budget/>

xi Maryland State Child Care Association, 2021.

xii Maryland State Child Care Association, 2021.

xiii MDCEP analysis of 2015–2019 IPUMS American Community Survey microdata.

Mary Beth Testa Prince George's Child Resource Cen

Uploaded by: Mary Beth Testa

Position: FAV

February 21, 2023

**Testimony Concerning SB 873:
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established”**

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment

Mary Beth Testa
Prince George’s Child Resource Center
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Thank you, Senator Washington, for your leadership on SB 873. SB 873 calls for monthly payments to licensed child care providers who are willing and able to enroll children who receive a subsidy through the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). I urge your support for this legislation.

My name is Mary Beth. I’ve had the privilege to be a part of the Prince George’s Child Resource Center team since 2015. One of the things I get to do is connect with early childhood educators in centers and family child care homes, listen to their stories, and be led by where they want action.

As you consider Senate Bill 873 to create monthly payments of stabilization grants, I want you to notice please that the field of early childhood educators – they aren’t ok.

Early childhood educators are people, people who need to be healthy and well, compensated and supported, to show up every day. They are showing up, but we are taking them for granted. They are part of the fabric of our communities - necessary so that parents can confidently go to work and children are in safe, nurturing learning environments.

In December 2022, researchers shared that nationally, 81% of center-based and 73% of family child care providers report stress, anxiety, depression as a result of staff shortages - feelings they know are impacting their abilities to provide high quality careⁱ.

Stabilization grants approved by Congress in early 2021 made a huge difference. These investments rolled out in Maryland in a few rounds, and ended in 2022. Two things about that.

1. It is not reasonable to expect those funds to last. They arrived in a moment of mounting debt for child care programs and personally for the child care workforce. They ended in a moment of intensity of gas prices and grocery prices while competition for wages pulled more and more people away from this work.
2. Providers in Maryland share that they’re still here because of those grants, but for how much longer? The number one thing they’d need in order to stay? Competitive wagesⁱⁱ.

We can not afford to lose anyone else, and we must build a system that new educators and program leaders can be a part of, where they can support themselves and their own families, as they support all of our families.

What are the interventions? They need dollars to operate, and professional wages for themselves and staff. They need housing and groceries they can afford. They need health care. They need dollars to make these things possible.

The quality of child care, and the experience of the early years, are crucial to school readiness and supporting working families. The core of the quality of child care is the caregiver educator herself.

The child care crisis is not over in Maryland. Thank you for your leadership and your support for child care through recent General Assembly sessions. There is more to do and we can do it together. Please see what it takes to do this every day, and pass SB 873.

ⁱ “Overdue: A New Child Care System that Supports Children, Families and Providers” December 2022
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e7cf2f62c45da32f3c6065e/t/63a1d9582916181ff4b729be/1671551320275/overdue+new+child+care+system+factsheet+dec2022.pdf>

ⁱⁱ “Uncertainty Ahead Means Instability Now” Maryland fact sheet December 2022
<https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/maryland+naeyc+2022+fall+survey+0.pdf>

SB-873-2.pdf

Uploaded by: Patti Smith

Position: FAV

February 21, 2023

**Testimony Concerning SB 873:
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established”**

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment

Patti Smith-Director
Greenway Learning Center for Infants and Children
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Child care providers are in crisis, and so are families, and Prince George’s County is no exception. I am no exception.

SB 873 calls for monthly payments to licensed child care providers who are willing and able to enroll children who receive a subsidy through the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). I urge EVERYONE to support this legislation.

Through this bill, I could receive as much as \$2,500 per month to be used for cleaning and food supplies, early childhood educator wages, and the ongoing expenses of running my program and being available to the families counting on me so that they can go to work. I thank Senator Washington for leading this bill and for seeing what it takes to do this every day.

- As a licensed provider of 44 children ages 8 weeks-5 Years of age, our Center has always enrolled children that receive financial assistance through the Dept. of Social Services (now referred to as CCS). This program is a nightmare to work with-the State is always behind in payments and is plagued with issues processing paperwork. Through all of the issues with the program Greenway Learning Center has continued to enroll low income children because we recognize the importance of quality care for ALL.

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 and 2022 were an important step. There is more to be done.

Monthly grants from the staff would be a great asset to our Center and I am sure all providers in Maryland. We are all struggling to re-build from the pandemic and currently experiencing the worst staffing shortage in my 40 year hiring history. This funds could be used to attract qualified teachers to the field and could be used to reward the essential staff that have worked during the entire pandemic. They were deemed essential during the pandemic and have been working on the front line the entire time with little to no recognition or respect. Child Care needs these grants to survive.

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.

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.

The child care crisis is not over in Maryland. Thank you for your leadership and your support for child care through recent General Assembly sessions. There's more to do and we can do it together. Thank you for supporting SB 873.

I encourage all of you to visit a local child care program and home provider to see us in action. We are essential and respect for our work is needed. Our door is open and we welcome all to come spend some time in our shoes-it is not an easy job and the pay is minimal but the rewards are enormous in the work we are doing for Maryland's youngest and most valuable citizens.

Thank You,
Patti Smith-Director
Greenwaylearningcenter.com

SB 873 Testimony 2-21-23.pdf

Uploaded by: Rebecca Hancock

Position: FAV



**Testimony Concerning Senate Bill 873
Submitted to the Senate
Education, Energy and the Environment Committee**

February 22, 2023

The Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA) is a professional association that has represented Registered Family Child Care and Large Family Child Care homes in Maryland since 1983. The mission of MSFCCA is to promote and enhance the profession by advocating for all the 989 small businesses through the 19 local associations that make up our statewide membership. However, our advocacy not only supports our members but all child care providers in Maryland. Family child care programs across Maryland serve thousands of children daily, enabling parents to work and support a strong Maryland Economy. MSFCCA advocates for our members on pending legislation, regulatory changes, and statewide programs and initiatives that support or impact their communities and small businesses by working closely with legislators, local association leadership and other advocacy organizations. We offer professional development opportunities to our members with training on the latest in policy and developmentally appropriate practice while promoting and supporting quality regulated child care. The MSFCCA leadership are volunteers that currently work, or have worked, as registered family child care providers and passionately serve this unique and vital profession.

Maryland is recognized as a leader nationally in early care and education policy and MSFCCA is thankful for the opportunity to affect change and ensure equal access to early care and education opportunities for all children in Maryland. The first five years are critical in a child's development, for this reason adequate funding and reasonable policy is vital for family child care programs to guarantee their continued service to Maryland families

However, currently we have seen a dramatic decline in family child care programs, there are

many reasons for this but one is the financial viability to maintain their programs, so they close. With the closure of many child care programs, Family and Child Care Centers, this has caused a crisis for parent's seeking quality programs in which to place their children.

MSFCCA supports any legislation that will help stabilize the child care field and provide quality child care programs for Maryland's Children. MSFCCA along with our partners support SB 873.

SB873_MDAEYC_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Stephanie Schaefer

Position: FAV



Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

Testimony in Support of SB 873
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program - Established”
Submitted to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Committee
February 22, 2023

Position: Support

The Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEYC) supports SB 873, which would establish the Child Care Stabilization Program to provide funding to help stabilize and support eligible child care providers.

MDAEYC is a professional association of 1,900 early childhood educators, allied professionals, and families. We promote high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood education practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children. Many of our members are educators working in child care centers or family child care homes.

The child care industry has long faced financial challenges, with providers operating with razor-thin profit margins. Since the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the child care industry has been under incredible strain, with a number of providers permanently closing. During the depths of the pandemic, the Federal government and Maryland have invested much-needed relief funds in child care providers, enabling many programs to continue operating despite the additional challenges presented by the pandemic.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), our national organization, conducted a series of surveys of the impact of the pandemic on child care providers nationally and in Maryland over the past few years.¹ These survey results document the tremendous need for ongoing child care stabilization funds like those that would be provided by SB 873, both to keep child care programs open, and to prevent tuition raises for families using child care services.

¹ National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2022, November). *Uncertainty Ahead Means Instability Now: Why Families, Children, Educators, Businesses, and States Need Congress to Fund Child Care*. <https://www.naeyc.org/pandemic-surveys>

In the most recent survey, conducted in November 2022, NAEYC surveyed thousands of programs across the country. NAEYC surveyed 109 child care providers in Maryland (with 50% from child care centers and 48% from family child care homes).

The survey findings² show that pandemic relief funds have reached most Maryland child care programs, and have helped child care providers stay open:

- 74 percent of Maryland child care program directors and 92 percent of Maryland family child care providers surveyed reported that their programs received pandemic relief grants.
- 40 percent of Maryland child care program administrators surveyed reported that their program would have closed without relief grants.
- 65 percent of Maryland child care program administrators reported that their programs will have to raise tuition when relief funds end.

SB 873 would provide critical funding to help stabilize the operations of child care programs while contributing to their sustainability. Child care programs are an essential part of Maryland's economic infrastructure that supports young children's development and parents' employment. We urge your support of this legislation.

If you have any questions, please contact: Stephanie Schaefer, Program Coordinator, at stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org or 240-441-3280.

² National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2022, November). *Uncertainty Ahead Means Instability Now: Survey of Child Care Providers Shows Why Families, Children, Educators, Businesses, and States Need Congress to Fund Child Care*. <https://bit.ly/marylandsurvey>

SEIU 500 Testimony IN FAVOR of SB 873.pdf

Uploaded by: Terry Cavanagh

Position: FAV



SEIU Local 500

901 Russell Avenue, Suite 300
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20879

Testimony in FAVOR of SB 873 Child Care Stabilization Program

Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 22, 2023
2:00 PM

Presented by: Terry Cavanagh representing SEIU Local 500

We urge a FAVORABLE Report on SB 873

Among the two million SEIU members across the country are 200,00 child care providers. In Maryland, Local 500 represents thousands of family child care providers.

The last three years have been like no other for most, if not all, of us. The impact of COVID-19 was felt acutely by parents, children and providers in our child care system. The top reason why so many Marylanders did not return to work when their businesses or employers reopened was, they could not find affordable, reliable, quality child care.

SB 873 addresses a crisis facing our state. In the last few years there's been a precipitous drop in the number of child care providers who accept children enrolled in the Child Care Scholarship Program. In 2010, based on the information provided to us by the state, there were approximately 8,000 licensed family child care providers. Today, there are only 3,900 and of those, only about 1,200 accept children in the CCS Program. Unless you act, that number is likely to continue to decline.

In recent years the Maryland General Assembly has taken significant steps to improve our child care system. Passing SB 873 would continue us on that path. The bill takes a simple and straightforward approach to drawing more providers into the CCS market – it provides a modest financial incentive for accepting children in the CCS Program. We believe this is a smart, relatively small investment that will pay significant dividends for Maryland’s parents, children, businesses, and providers.

Thank you.

We ask a **FAVORABLE REPORT ON SB 873**.

MD Alliance of YMCAs SB873.pdf

Uploaded by: Tyler Bennett

Position: FAV



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Senate Bill 873
Child Care Provider Stabilization Program-Established
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Budget and Taxation Committee

Testimony from the Maryland Alliance of YMCAs

On behalf of the Maryland Alliance of YMCAs, we are pleased to present this written testimony in strong support of Senator Mary Washington's Senate Bill 873, which would establish a Child Care Provider Stabilization Program in the State of Maryland for fiscal year 2025 and each fiscal year thereafter.

Simply stated, Maryland's childcare system is in deep crisis, and heading in a perilous direction. The number of providers has declined over 13% in the past three years, and the continuing significant increases in labor costs (which will only be exacerbated by an earlier than previously planned increase to a \$15 an hour minimum wage) will inevitably push far more out of business if nothing is done.

The Childcare Stabilization grants provided to Maryland's childcare providers over the past several years, funded by the federal dollars that came as a result of COVID, helped keep most providers (including the Y) afloat. In the case of Maryland's Ys, absent those funds, we would have likely had to cease much of our childcare work. Now, with the abrupt announcement only recently from the Maryland State Department of Education that the final tranche of those grants will be redirected elsewhere, providers like the Y who serve those other than the wealthy are being pushed to the limit. Without a recurring state subsidy, the numbers simply don't work.

Collectively, Maryland's Ys are the largest non-profit provider of childcare in the State of Maryland (inclusive of early childhood – preschool and Head Start, before and after school enrichment, summer camp and Community Schools out-of-school-time services). Maryland's Ys have been faced with an unprecedented increase in costs (driven largely by wages) over the past several years, as we struggled to keep our doors open to continue to serve Maryland's working families. Given our mission to keep our pricing as low as possible and to provide significant financial assistance for those who struggle to afford our services, we have very little ability to pass along our rapidly increasing costs to the working families we serve.

Unfortunately, the United States is the only developed country in the world that doesn't significantly subsidize childcare, and the State of Maryland hasn't developed a statewide strategy or identified a dedicated revenue stream to fund a long-term subsidy. The need for the State of Maryland to confront its childcare crisis is now, as a failure to do so will result in both a mass exodus of providers and cause an economic crisis for the state, as working families who don't have the luxury of having only one parent working will be forced to make some very difficult decisions. The impact of thousands of Marylanders exiting the labor force will be felt for a very long time.

The economics of childcare work, which have always been challenging, are now untenable without a subsidy to cover rising wages and protect high quality providers serving working families. Senator Washington's bill makes that issue plain, and proposes to finally do something material about it. Failure to pass this bill will mean that childcare will become more like a privilege for the well-do-to, rather than a resource available to all of Maryland's families.

We would very much welcome further conversations with the relevant legislators in the Maryland's Senate and House of Delegates, and are committed to working in collaboration to solve Maryland's childcare crisis.

The Maryland Alliance of YMCAs is made up of the following organizations:

- The YMCA of Central Maryland (Serving Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll Harford and Howard Counties, and Baltimore City) (John Hoey, CEO)
- The YMCA of the Chesapeake (Serving Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, Dorchester, Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset Counties) (Robbie Gill, CEO)
- The YMCA of Cumberland (Serving Allegany County) (Julie O'Neal, Executive Director)
- The YMCA of Frederick County (Serving Frederick County) (Chris Colville, CEO)
- The YMCA of Hagerstown (Serving Washington County)(Maria Rubeling, CEO)
- The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington (Serving Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties) (Angie Reese-Hawkins, CEO)

February 22, 2023