



**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.