

Ways and Means Committee of the State of Maryland

February 9, 2023

My name is Jasmin Field and I am a former Pre-K Teacher and current Homeschooling parent in Harford County, MD. I can not begin to explain the benefits and growth I've witnessed through Outdoor learning with my own children as well as our surrounding community.

Through my completion of a nature-based learning certification through ERAFANS, I was inspired to interact with nature even more. Creating tangible experiences with water, mud, trees, leaves, rocks and more encouraged children within our community to refrain from typical toys last summer, when I launched an Outdoor Classroom on our property! Watching the hunger for natural learning was truly inspiring, as their exposure to nature was limited through the local schools they attended.

As branches were painted, self-made rivers were formed, log-based animal forts were built and imaginative camping adventures fueled group problem-solving activities, the elements of nature strengthened their focus and group work skills. It was an honor to watch and be a part of! I was grateful to expose both my own children and surrounding neighbors with these wonderful adventures that continue to help them "think out of the box" today.

I am ever hopeful that more parents venture outdoors with their little ones, embracing the sounds, textures and beautiful visuals nature has to offer. It is truly an experience unlike any other.

Thank you for your consideration in forwarding the HB525 Outdoor Preschool Licensing Bill.

Jasmin Field