



Hearing Testimony March 1, 2023  
Senate Ways and Means Committee  
Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC  
House Bill 868  
SUPPORT

**We strongly urge the passage of HB 868 and applaud Delegate McCaskill's leadership on this vital piece of legislation.**

Greetings Chairwoman Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and all members of the Ways and Means Committee. My name is Fatima Whitmore, and I am a family childcare provider in Baltimore County and a leader for our Early Learning Division with SEIU Local 500. I am writing in support of HB 868 the Child Care Provider Stabilization Program. The Child Care Provider Stabilization Program is vital to keep early childcare educators in the field. This funding is needed to support the providers who accept families receiving the Child Care Scholarship. This program will help offset the expenses paid by subsidized and unsubsidized families.

Our industry needs better employee wages, bonuses, childcare supplies, and teaching materials needed such as resources, books, puzzles, teaching tools, and hands-on learning activities for each learning area in child development. Enrolling children in our programs who receive the Child Care Scholarship will be supported even more with this program. Providers will be able to use this funding to meet the continuous needs of their programs. The supplemental income from this fund is essential in Maryland maintaining a qualified workforce.

This program would also encourage many providers to keep their programs serving our communities. I believe this program will give Maryland family childcare providers the instant financial boost needed to maintain the children in their care. This program will benefit our providers with meaningful financial gateways for the future. We must prioritize caring for children as a core part of Maryland's commitment to support every student, why not start with supporting our family childcare providers who are responsible for preparing our early learners for K-12 education.

Covid threw our family childcare providers on the frontlines with no warning. We prevailed and cared for the children of Maryland when parents needed it the most. I am asking this committee to support this program so that our family childcare providers can continue to help families access childcare. This program would alleviate some of the family childcare provider shortages Maryland is currently facing.

Reliable childcare and early education will be out of reach for many families without family childcare providers. This program will help close the financial gap for family childcare providers. Without this program, providers will continue to struggle to make it work, while seeking solutions that create stress, instability, and challenges for themselves and families. The Child Care Stabilization Program is what we need to prevent Maryland family childcare providers from leaving the childcare workforce altogether.

**We ask for your support for HB 868 and strongly urge a favorable committee report!**

**Service Employees International Union, Local 500, CtW, CLC  
901 Russell Avenue, Gaithersburg, MD 20879  
301-740-7100 [www.seiu500.org](http://www.seiu500.org)  
Pia Morrison, President**