

February 27, 2023

**Testimony Concerning HB 868
“Child Care Provider Stabilization Program – Established”**

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education, Energy and Environment

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

HB 868 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). We urge your support for this legislation.

Through this bill, we 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 our program and being available to the families counting on us so that they can go to work. We thank Senator Washington for leading this bill and for seeing what it takes to do this every day.

- Rising Generations is a licensed early learning center. We have served children and families in Prince Georges County since 1997. However, we started as a Family Provider in 1989.
- We are in the Excels program and working towards Maryland Accreditation.
- Our programs enroll children and families in the Maryland Scholarship program
- Our program has been enrolled in the CACFP program to ensure that our children are served healthy and nutritious meals daily
- The current licensed capacity of our Largo center is 146/138 enrolled
- The current licensed capacity of our Lanham center is 105/98 enrolled. There are 2 rooms to unopened that would accommodate 40 additional students.

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.

Additional funding such as that proposed in the bill SB 868 could; provide bonuses to our hardworking dedicated staff; attract more candidates in our hiring process through incentive bonuses; provide additional benefits 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 HB 868.

Respectfully Submitted,

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