

February 27, 2023

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

Submitted to the House Ways and Means Committee

Position: Favorable

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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.

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). 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.

My center provides early childhood education in a bilingual setting to embrace the diverse community and promote the appreciation of diversity and multiculturalism. We need all the help to continue serving our families.

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.

With the high cost of living we are all facing is fundamental to be able to obtain all the resources available to continue serving our families.

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.

Thank you,

Carolina Reyes