



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 8, 2023

Chairwoman Vanessa Atterbeary
Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

HB 292 Child Care Providers – Registration and Licensing - Exemptions - **Request for Favorable Report**

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

As the Maryland Military Coalition’s Communication Director, I am requesting your **favorable report** on HB 292. For the record, my name is CAPTAIN Lynn Nash. I am a retired nurse, who completed over 30 years of active-duty service in both the Army and the U.S. Public Health Service. I am well acquainted with the issue. As a military parent, I used on-base childcare when my children were young, and as a Community Health Nurse, it was my job to conduct training for staff as well as to do frequent unannounced inspections of both child care centers and privately operated family homes.

This bill provides for the exemption of certain family childcare homes, large family childcare homes, and childcare centers located on certain federal property or certified by a branch of the U.S. Department of Defense or the U.S. Coast Guard from certain registration and licensing requirements for childcare providers in the state; and generally relating to registration and licensing requirements for childcare providers.

Here are some facts that should grab your attention:

- The [National Database of Childcare Prices](#), part of the Women’s Bureau of the Department of Labor, offers the most comprehensive look yet at how child care costs vary across 2,360 counties in 47 states.
- In a report released last week, the average cost for parents with young children in Montgomery County, where I live, was **15.6% of their total income**. The report **calls these prices as “untenable for families”**.

- Child care prices were consistently higher for infant care, with the median price for **one child** in center-based infant care ranging from **\$7,461** in small counties to **\$15,417** in very large counties.
- Among home-based providers, infant care ranged from **\$5,824** in small counties to **\$9,892** in very large counties.
- Among preschool-aged children, center-based prices **per child** ranged from **\$6,239** in small counties to **\$11,050** in very large counties.
- Home-based child care prices ranged from **\$5,541** in small counties to **\$9,019** (\$10,045 in very large counties).
- The burden is **even higher for families with multiple children in before- and after-school care or center-based child care**. The analysis showed **29 percent of families with children under 6 have two or more in that age-group**.
- **High child care costs are keeping some families — especially women — out of the labor market**, the Women’s Bureau report noted.
- The analysis found that even a 10 percent increase in child care costs causes a 1 percentage point decrease in moms in the workforce. A 50 percent increase dropped the number of employed mothers by 2 percentage points, and in counties where child care costs more than doubled, maternal employment dropped 4 percentage points

In her introduction, Delegate Patterson gave you the figure that 23% of relocating military families are unable to find childcare. This difficulty often means that the spouse, cannot work outside the home, limiting the income of the family further.

As Mr. Arnold has noted, not only does military child care fill the need, but it also results in positive outcomes for the children in the form of cognitive, social and language development. However, the numbers of family providers needed is almost 1,500.

As an Army child care trainer and inspector, I can speak to the standards of quality and safety. DoD providers receive MORE training than the standard provider licensed in Maryland. They are trained, required to maintain careful records and inspected frequently. **In over 10 years, I never had a single center or family home found to be unsatisfactory—that’s how good they are.**

Requiring a DoD trained provider to submit to additional training and certification in Maryland is time consuming and financially difficult. Our providers need to come to the state, get their homes ready and start caring for children, especially in the case of junior service member spouses, where that 2nd income is necessary in high-cost Maryland, where base housing is limited and housing “on the economy” can easily cost over \$2,000/mo.

The availability of safe, affordable child care is not only a recruitment issue, but also a retention issue. Service members need to know that no matter what, their kids are safe and well-cared for.

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HB 292 – Child Care Providers – Registration and Licensing - Exemptions

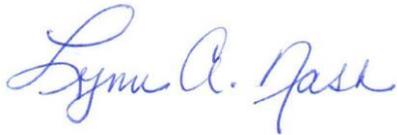
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As Mr. Arnold pointed out, dual certification is duplicative. If permitted to function in accordance with their Service's regulations, providers would be able to work immediately after being re-certified and approved by the local installation commander. **This would be a win-win.**

The Maryland Military Coalition, is a **voluntary**, non-partisan **organization representing 19 veteran service organizations**, who, in turn, serve over 150,000 Maryland uniformed services men, women and their families. The Coalition **strongly supports** House Bill 292 – Child care provider exemption and asks for your **favorable report**.

Thank you to Delegate Patterson for sponsoring this important legislation. It drives whether **service members join and stay**. We appreciate her leadership in this critical area and look forward to continuing to work with her and Senator Gile on this issue.

Respectfully,

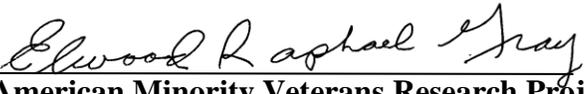


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Member Organizations, Maryland Military Coalition

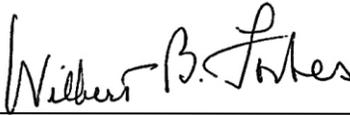

Air Force Sergeants Association

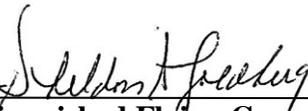

American Military Society

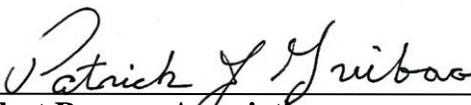

American Minority Veterans Research Project


Association of the United States Navy


Commissioned Officers Association of the
US Public Health Service

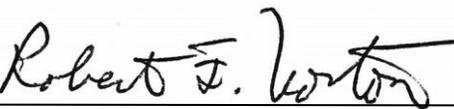

Disabled American Veterans


Distinguished Flying Cross Association


Fleet Reserve Association


Jewish War Veterans of the USA

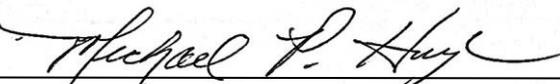

Maryland Air National Guard Retirees'
Association

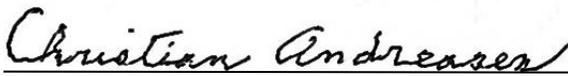

Military Officers Association of America


Military Order of the Purple Heart


Montford Point Marines of America


National Association for Black Veterans


Naval Enlisted Reserve Association


NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers


Reserve Organization of America


Society of Military Widows


Veterans of Foreign Wars