

February 27, 2023

Subject: **Support for HB1219-Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023**

Esteemed Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

On behalf of Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) and the entire Nonprofit Montgomery organization, we write in support of **HB1219-Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023**.

We applaud the administration and many sponsors for recognizing and addressing numerous educator workforce shortages and barriers impacting our state, our children, our families, and our education system. MMF strongly supports the inclusion of the early care and education and Pre-K educators as part of HB1219. We urge the Committee to recognize that the early education workforce is the backbone of the social-emotional and academic and cognitive learning and development of our youngest learners, ages 0-5. The COVID-19 pandemic decimated the early care and education workforce across our state and revealed tremendous inequity in professional pathways, compensation, and sustainability of this workforce due to the lack of necessary public investment. Initiatives that provide tangible investment in rebuilding the educator workforce such as HB1219 are essential not only for today's generation of learners, but those to come. In addition, investments in supporting the Pre-K educator workforce such as those included in Pillar 1 of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future will ensure that early educators supporting children ages 4-5 have access to career-building pathways. However, we need similar essential investments in the educator workforce that nurture the learning of our children starting at birth-age 5, a time when critical brain development takes place and serves as the foundation of lifelong success.

We appreciate House Bill 1219's intentional outreach to nontraditional communities as well as inclusion of evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. We, however, underscore the importance of culturally, linguistically, and technologically appropriate outreach as well as a more critical look at compensation and education requirements given the reality that people are simply not choosing to enter the education field. In addition, we recommend support for the inclusion of community providers and an inclusive approach to considering overseas education certificates and experience as a part of this program.

Nonprofit Montgomery asks for your support and recognition of the essential role of the early childhood workforce in educating our leaders of tomorrow and in bolstering our state's economic success. Immediate and consistent investment in the child care educator workforce is necessary to grow the opportunities of our richly diverse children, families, and communities across Maryland-and serve as a needed engine for prosperity for our state.

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Montgomery Moving Forward (MMF) is a collective impact initiative of [Nonprofit Montgomery](#). We work with partners across sectors to effect systems-wide change on issues affecting all county residents. MMF convenes the [Early Care and Education Workforce Advocacy Coalition](#). The Coalition is a regional public-private coalition of 50+ early care and education leaders and advocates from the business, education, public, philanthropic, and nonprofit sectors that work collaboratively with state elected partners to reduce barriers to quality child care and education

and create equitable processes, practices, and pathways for children, their caregivers, and the child care workforce across the state of Maryland.

We are eager to work in partnership with your committee to ensure the full recovery, resilience, and sustainability of the education workforce, of which the early care and education workforce is an essential part.

We urge you to give H1219 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Lavontte Chatmon
Executive Director, Nonprofit Montgomery