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Charles County

Ways and Means Committee

Subcommittees

Local Revenues

Chair, Racing and Gaming

Chair, Southern Maryland
House Delegation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 0292

Child Care Providers – Registration and Licensing – Exemptions

February 8, 2023

Good afternoon, Chair Vanessa Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Jheanelle Wilkins, and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee. For the record, I am Delegate Edith Patterson, sponsor of House Bill 0292 – Child Care Providers – Registration and Licensing – Exemptions. 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 (DOD) 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.

Military families frequently move every two to four years and finding safe, highly regulated and affordable childcare in a new community can be extremely challenging. In fact, it was reported that 23 percent of active-duty families who have a childcare need are unable to find childcare. The DOD recognized the need to overhaul their childcare system and began to allow spouses of active-duty military members become certified to provide childcare in their homes, on or off an installation, in government owned leased housing and cited as Family Child Care Centers.

In Maryland, Family Child Care providers are required to be licensed and registered with the Maryland Department of Education as well as certified by the installation they support. Requiring a provider to register with both entities can delay childcare, put pressure on military families ultimately resulting in retention issues, and cause financial hardships for military spouses trying to reestablish their businesses.

The passage of this bill will aid in streamlining and expediting the process - providers will not be required to have duplicative filings with both the Department of Education and Department of Defense. By turning responsibility over to the Department of Defense, the State Department of Education's Office of Child Care's Licensing will be relieved of regulatory activities including registration, facility inspection, technical assistance, investigations and when necessary, enforcement while at the same time, continuing to provide a high level of care for our children.

I respectfully urge you to vote favorably for HB0292 with the technical amendment. Thank you for your consideration.

Delegate Edith J. Patterson