

# **Bill testimony-SB 882-Family Child Care Alliance o**

Uploaded by: Bill Hudson

Position: FAV



THE FAMILY CHILD CARE  
**Alliance**  
OF MARYLAND

**Testimony Concerning: SB 882**

**Title: Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment**

**Submitted to: Education, Energy, and the Environment**

**Date of hearing: February 23, 2024**

## **Position: Support**

The Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland (the Alliance) was incorporated in 2019 to develop a staffed family child care (FCC) network to provide various types of technical assistance to the over four thousand FCC providers in Maryland. In 2020, in cooperation with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Alliance created the ASPIRE PreK program to grow the supply of state-funded PreK programs in eligible FCC homes. Prior to the creation of the ASPIRE program, MSDE reports that an average of one FCC provider participated in the state-funded PreK program each year.

In the fall of 2023, the ASPIRE PreK program had established fifty PreK programs in eligible FCC homes, at least one program in sixteen of the state's school districts. All fifty programs are led by a lead teacher with either a P-3 certification or they have a bachelor's degree and are pursuing certification. As of February 2024, over 220 eligible three and four-year-olds are enrolled in these programs, along with over four hundred more of various ages. Our goal is to have five hundred programs across the state by FY 2031 with space for over three thousand PreK-aged children.

All PreK teachers in ASPIRE PreK go through an intensive three-year program supported by highly qualified instructional coaches. Our program focuses on improving teaching practice, programmatic effectiveness, and creating environments consistent with high-quality PreK programs. This program is designed to mirror the three-year induction program required for new teachers in Maryland's school districts.

The goals of the ASPIRE program are:

- To increase the supply of P-3 certified teachers providing high-quality PreK instruction in FCC homes;
- To build a support network for P-3 certified teachers working in FCC homes;
- To ensure all children in FCC PreK programs, regardless of eligibility for public PreK, enter kindergarten with all the skills they need to succeed and
- To lead the effort to design and test systems to best support PreK in FCC and then make those findings available across the field.

The Alliance strongly supports SB 882. The Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program (GOFCC) has proven to be a viable program to help stem the decline in family child care (FCC) homes in Maryland. These small, overwhelming women-owned businesses are essential for two reasons. First, the vast majority of parents who pay for child care for infants and toddlers use FCC businesses. Second, the ASPIRE PreK program has demonstrated that with the appropriate support program, eligible FCC business owners can offer high-quality PreK instruction, thereby helping to create the spaces needed to meet the PreK targets of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

The Alliance also supports SB 882 because the GOFCC program serves as a feeder network into our newly created ASPIRE Apprenticeship program. Our apprenticeship program is the only FCC-specific apprenticeship program registered with Maryland's Department of Labor and one of the few such programs in the nation. The ASPIRE Apprenticeship is designed to give real-world experience and training to those individuals working to open their own FCC business. The GOFCC helps them get trained and licensed, and the apprenticeship program gives them experience.

We hope you will give your support to SB 882.

**SB0882-EEE\_MACo\_SUP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brianna January

Position: FAV



## Senate Bill 882

### *Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Committee

Date: February 23, 2024

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 882. This bill would make the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program into a permanent program to support Marylanders interested in starting private child care services. It comes at a time when child care, and early childhood education, are undergoing a transformation with the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated the shortage of licensed child care providers to support the safe care of Maryland's children and support the state's working families. Maryland does not currently have enough licensed providers to meet the needs of such families balancing work and child care. Furthermore, as the State expands universal pre-kindergarten under the Blueprint with the incorporation of private providers into public early childhood education, communities are concerned there won't be sufficient child care services for infants to three-year-olds.

SB 882 helps address these issues. The bill would convert the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program (GOFCC) into a permanent program to provide technical assistance, mentorship, and professional development to Maryland residents interested in starting their own child care services. The GOFCC program was established in Montgomery County and has expanded to more than half of the state's counties: Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Montgomery, Prince George's, Washington, and, Wicomico. The expansion of the program to every geographical region is a testament to its success and community buy-in.

While counties have creatively addressed the needs for reliable and safe child care, they welcome new and innovative approaches to stabilizing the industry, like GOFCC. Consistent and safe child care is critical for economic development, successful families and communities, and the development of children. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** SB 882 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.

**- MSCCA Testimony - SB 882 Growing FCC fin.pdf**

Uploaded by: Christina Peusch

Position: FAV



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## **Maryland State Child Care Association**

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Email: [info@mscca.org](mailto:info@mscca.org)  
[www.mscca.org](http://www.mscca.org)

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*The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) is a non-profit, statewide, professional association incorporated in 1984 to promote the growth and development of child care and learning centers in Maryland. MSCCA has over 5000 members working in the field of child care/early childhood education. We believe children are our most important natural resource and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.*

### **Testimony: HB 1139 Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program-Permanent Establishment Submitted to: Education, Energy and Environment Committee February 23, 2024**

MSCCA fully supports SB 882.

Family child care programs are essential to the workforce and communities. This important legislation recognizes the success of Growing Family Child Care pilot program in Maryland. SB 882 establishes the Growing Family Child Care program in permanently in law and provides necessary funding in budget to continue to support family child care providers throughout the state and ultimately benefit families and children they serve.

Family Child Care is an important option for families. SB 882 is critical in supporting working families in developmentally appropriate settings and provides funding for the program to build capacity. Many areas of the state have child care deserts where child care, especially family child care is desperately needed.

The child care industry has not fully recovered from the pandemic and was tenuous prior to the pandemic. According to MSDE, child care has lost over 800 programs/providers. The cost of child care is increasing to keep up with costs of inflation and as it does, female unemployment decreases by 5%. Already, 160,000 women have left the workforce due to primarily child care and transportation issues.

For decades, we have undervalued and underinvested in our child care system, and now our economy—[and our most vulnerable workers](#)—are paying the price. It will take the combined efforts of the federal government, state leaders, and businesses to ensure every family has access to affordable, quality childcare that can move the country and its economy forward. SB 882 makes an impact by building capacity which leads to more access to child care for families.

Child care is an important economic and equity imperative and child care providers are the backbone of society. SB 882 supports the growth of family child care in our neighborhoods and communities as they are the fabric of family support, while also driving the economy.

MSCCA asks for a favorable report.

**MD Catholic Conference\_SB 882\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: FAV



**MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE**

**February 23, 2024**

**SB 882**

**Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment**

**Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 882. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 882 would make permanent the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Program in the Department of Education, established through a pilot program in 2021 through HB 944 of that year. The creation of the pilot program was supported by the Conference. Through this bill, MSDE is afforded the ability to provide grants to local jurisdictions or child care licensing regions to increase the supply and ensure the sustainability of family child care providers in areas with higher numbers of low-income Marylanders. The bill mandates a very modest funding level of \$450,000, starting in FY 2026 and each fiscal year thereafter.

These grants would provide much needed support to a promote growth of a vital and essential sector of Marylander's everyday lives. Several hundred child care providers have been forced to close their doors in Maryland since early 2020, leading to less options for child care access for working families. The passage of this bill would help to reverse the trend of the declining number of child care providers in the state, thus providing greater access to child care options and stabilizing costs for Maryland parents.

Child Care is an essential component to supporting strong, economically secure families. Additionally, the Church supports this bill as a part of its priority interest in alleviating poverty in our state, as enabling working parents' continued access to child care services is an imperative part of combating poverty. Often, a barrier to sustainable and full-time employment is the availability and affordability of reliable child care services. The State should thus do all it can to support access to child care services for working parents.

The Conference appreciates your consideration, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 882.



# **Letters of Support and Testimonials GOFCC.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lacey Eidman

Position: FAV

February 16, 2024

Marquita Jackson  
STIMS Little Learners Daycare  
269 Clyde Avenue  
Halethorpe, MD 21227  
stims.learn@gmail.com

To whom it may concern,

Hello my name is Marquita Jackson and I am a proud graduate of the GOFCC Program. I completed my cohort in August of 2023 and that is also the month I obtained my state registration for family childcare. When I started my journey of opening as a family care provider, I was so relieved that this program was available to me and others that wanted to do the same but needed guidance, direction, and support. The GOFCC program is a unique program that has provided myself and so many others with all the necessary tools to open as a family provider and remains a resource so that family providers have continuous support and professional development as they grow their program. Through this program, each cohort creates a community of family care providers who encourage and support one another, including the instructors. It was not too long ago that providers did not have such an opportunity, and dealt with the stress of building their programs alone. Since graduating, I have referred others to the program and I plan on becoming a mentor in the program for future participants. With GOFCC, active change happens and concrete bridges are built. If there is any way the program can carry on, please allow this administration to do so. This program helped change my life when I was ready to give up on working in childcare altogether and with the level of support that they provide I'm sure many others will say that their lives have changed for the better as well.

Sincerely,  
Marquita Jackson



**SEEING ABILITIES NOT DISABILITIES.**

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Abilities Network began providing services under GOFCC (Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care) in the fall of 2022. Since its inception, there has been tremendous growth and success with providing a comprehensive training and professional development program that helps participants overcome barriers and maximize the positive impacts of this program on local economies, communities, and families. When aspiring family child care providers become enrolled in GOFCC, they are given access to a support system and community that can take years to find when done on an individual basis. In this program, they receive high quality training and professional development that focuses on how to provide inclusive care. Once they become licensed by the state, they can begin having an immediate impact on the community and families they serve.

There are key differences that occur when someone attempts to become a licensed family child care (FCC) provider on their own, versus participating in Abilities network's GOFCC program:

1. A deeper understanding of both the rewards and challenges of being an FCC with guidance from our Professional Development Specialists, Early Childhood Coaches, and experienced mentors.
2. High-quality training is given in a cohort model that nurtures a community to provide vital networking and support systems that can last for many years.
3. Enhanced communication with local governing entities (Office of Child Care, fire marshals, MSDE, etc.) to ensure that participants are fully aware of state sponsored quality enhancement programs, including the Child Care Scholarship, MD EXCELS and Credentialing.
4. Business training and coaching to provide a solid foundation for successful business practices, leading to a ripple effect of positive economic outcomes for the provider, the families they serve and the surrounding community.

In summary, a family child care incubator program is essential for enhancing the quality of care, promoting professional development, ensuring regulatory compliance, building parental confidence, mitigating barriers, and supporting continuous improvement within family child care programs. By investing in training and professional development opportunities that support small business development, stakeholders can maximize the positive impacts of these programs on local economies, communities, and families.



Eastern Shore Child Care  
Resource Center  
*at Salisbury University*

## Impact Statement GOFCC

The economy of our state lies in the hands of the child care provider - parents need child care so they can work. Funding the Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care (GOFCC) project has allowed the Eastern Shore Child Care Resource Center (ESCCRC) to support 31 new home-based programs in the eight counties of the Eastern Shore. That means there are now at least 248 new slots for children in Maryland.

These slots support families of all cultures in the rural Eastern Shore. A nurturing learning environment where children interact with a mixed age group and follow a schedule similar to home is secure. When children feel comfortable, they can focus on learning and building social skills that result in a successful transition to a public-school structure. These child care programs are new small businesses that add to the prosperity and diversity of each community.

The GOFCC program at the ESCCRC provides an individualized plan and system of support for new home-based programs which creates a strong sense of entrepreneurship. Advertising and other recruitment strategies such as [openchildcaretoday.com](http://openchildcaretoday.com) attract interested individuals to the ESCCRC. The GOFCC Coordinator connects with all candidates first to explain the program and then to make a business plan based on their goals, timeline and their home environment's suitability for a child care program. Training requirements are met through a consortium of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies across the state working together to ensure all candidates have access to the classes they need. The GOFCC Coordinator motivates each candidate and supports their efforts to meet the State of Maryland requirements to establish a child care program in their home.

Candidate recruitment along with the encouragement, planning and support for new home-based child care programs have increased the availability of child care in the eight counties of the Eastern Shore. By the end of August 2024, twenty-one (21) more programs are poised to open which will result in a total of 416 new slots for the youngest citizens of Maryland.

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Suite 500  
East Campus Complex  
Salisbury, MD 21801  
410-543-6650



Eastern Shore Higher  
Education Center  
1000 College Circle  
Room #HEC 104D  
Wye Mills, MD 21679  
410-822-5400 ext. 2560





February 15, 2024

Karen Eisenhuth  
Maryland Family Network  
1800 Washington Blvd, Ste 445  
Baltimore, Maryland 21230-2344

Dear Karen,

As the GOFCC Coordinator for Child Care Choices, I have seen a tremendous response from potential Family Child Care business owners, families searching for childcare and stakeholders in the childcare industry. Our program started October 3, 2022, when I came onboard to take the grant that was received and bring the goals and action plans to fruition. Within two weeks we had secured prestigious spots in our communities to market the Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care initiative. With cooperation from local Board of Education offices, Judy Center programs and Head Start programs, we flooded our communities with brochures explaining our program and the recruitment process. In just three months, we had on-boarded 35 participants (i.e. providers and co-providers). Although our goal for the first year was to help 25 individuals open their FCC businesses, the overwhelming response necessitated that we assist a 2<sup>nd</sup> Cohort of 21 participants during our first program year. Our goals for our second program year, which began September 1, 2023, were equally ambitious. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Cohort had 20 participants and we just started our 4<sup>th</sup> Cohort of 34 participants. Our hope is to have funding to offer a 5<sup>th</sup> Cohort of 15-20 participants in late spring/early summer 2024. To date, 40 individuals across our five county region have successfully obtained their Family Child Care Registration, with 44 participants still in progress to open their own business or support someone opening their business as a co-provider.

But numbers only tell part of the story. The GOFCC program has helped to improve the licensing process, shortened the amount of time it would normally take a person to become registered, and helped other agencies identify and improve their processes which support Family Child Care. The program has also increased the number of individuals following through on their goal to open their FCC homes. Our CCRC has the pleasure of working with three Regional Licensing offices with 12 different Licensing Specialists. We have the unique opportunity to evaluate how each LS and RM interprets the regulations and enforces the requirements to become licensed. This has allowed us to work with OCC to clarify and standardize many of the requirements so that there is more consistency and less confusion regarding the interpretation of COMAR. In collaboration with OCC, we designed our program with specific Milestones for each of the four-months in our process. This streamlines the multiple agency approvals and outside clearances that must be obtained. By starting the different processes simultaneously and early in the licensing process, issues can be identified and resolved while other objectives are being met. If our program is followed to the letter and no major obstacles develop, participants can open within 4 months of starting our program compared to 6-12 months without our program.





In addition to improvements in the licensing process. Our program has also worked with Zoning offices within our five counties and countless municipalities. Many of our participants expressed that they would have given up the process if it were not for our coaching and support. Many of our participants are not native English speakers and many are not familiar with the regulatory process for our state. Helping them to find the resources and complete zoning applications, attend zoning hearings, giving them letters of support for their HOAs, speaking with the State Fire Marshal's office to clarify expectations, and sitting with them during meetings with OCC has empowered them to achieve their goal of opening a FCC home. Our participants gain confidence as we work alongside them to make those phone calls, have those meetings, and stand up for their right to have a Family Child Care in the communities in which they live.

There is still much work to be done. Family Child Care homes are still closing at an alarming rate. Funding for GOFCC not only helps to open new programs, but it gives participants the knowledge, confidence and skills to remain in business, to overcome obstacles and to provide a higher quality of care to children in their care. This program has the potential to not only recruit and retain new educators, but to support existing programs to remain in business. Opportunities still exist to create new collaborative FCC programs to meet requirements of the Blueprint, to expand the number of available slots for Birth to 3, and to allow educators to invest in their professional development and their professional impact. Continued funding will allow us to continue to open new programs as well as explore areas of opportunity and develop new initiatives to strengthen the child care industry so vital to the economic development of the communities in which we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dawna Rodeheaver'.

Dawna Rodeheaver, GOFCC Program Coordinator

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sarah Martin'.

Sarah Martin, Child Care Choices a program of the Mental Health Association Program Director





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February 19, 2024

To whom it may concern,

We are writing to provide testimony regarding the significant impact of the Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care (GOFCC) program on our community, the child care industry, and the economy as a whole. As GOFCC coaches, we have witnessed firsthand the transformative effects of this program on individuals aspiring to become family child care providers in Baltimore City.

The GOFCC program, which offers free technical assistance and training to individuals navigating the licensing process to establish family child care services, has been instrumental in addressing critical needs within our community. Below are some of the key impacts of the program for Baltimore City:

- 1. Community Empowerment:** GOFCC empowers individuals within our community by providing them with the necessary resources, knowledge, and support to pursue careers in family child care. By offering free technical assistance and training, the program removes barriers to entry and fosters entrepreneurship among residents of Baltimore City. Additionally, GOFCC goes above and beyond by providing essential furniture, toys, and supplies to participants, ensuring that they have the physical resources needed to meet licensing requirements and establish their family child care homes. This comprehensive support empowers individuals to overcome financial obstacles and pursue their dreams of becoming child care providers.
- 2. Quality Child Care Services:** The program plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of child care services available in our community. By equipping individuals with the skills and expertise needed to meet licensing requirements, GOFCC ensures that family child care providers offer safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environments for children. This focus on quality care, coupled with the provision of necessary furniture and supplies, contributes to the creation of enriching and stimulating environments where children can learn and thrive.
- 3. Economic Stimulus:** GOFCC serves as a catalyst for economic stimulus by promoting small business development and job creation in the child care industry. As individuals complete the program and establish licensed family child care homes, they contribute to the expansion of the local economy through their entrepreneurial endeavors. Moreover, the availability of high-quality child care services enables parents to participate more fully in the workforce, leading to increased productivity and economic stability within our community.



4. Long-Term Benefits: The impact of GOFCC extends beyond immediate outcomes, generating long-term benefits for our community, the child care industry, and the economy. By investing in the professional development of aspiring family child care providers, the program cultivates a skilled workforce capable of meeting the evolving needs of families and children. Additionally, the provision of quality child care services supports early childhood development, education, and school readiness, which are essential components of a thriving society.

In conclusion, the Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care (GOFCC) program is a valuable asset to our community, the child care industry, and the economy as a whole. Through its commitment to empowering individuals, promoting quality care, stimulating economic growth, and fostering long-term benefits, GOFCC embodies the spirit of innovation and collaboration necessary for building a brighter future for all. We urge you to continue supporting and investing in this vital program, ensuring its continued success and impact on generations to come.

Sincerely,  
Courtney Ross, Dazhane Clark & Whitney Meador  
Baltimore City GOFCC Coaches



**SB 882\_MFN\_FAV\_Weeldreyer Go FCC.pdf**

Uploaded by: Laura Weeldreyer

Position: FAV



**Testimony Concerning SB 882**  
**“Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment”**  
**Submitted to the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**February 23, 2024**

**Position: Support**

Maryland Family Network (MFN) strongly supports SB 882, which would on a permanent basis establish the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Program to increase and sustain the supply of family child care.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education, as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. We have been active in state and federal debates on child care policy and are strongly committed to ensuring that children, along with their parents, have access to high-quality, affordable programs and educational opportunities.

Registered family child care is a critical component of Maryland's child care delivery system. Family child care providers offer child care that most closely resembles the care that children receive in their own homes. Family child care providers care for many children who have special needs or need care during nontraditional hours. In rural areas, where population density may not support larger child care centers, family child care providers play a particularly important role. They also provide linguistically and culturally appropriate care within many communities in the State.

Unfortunately, the number of registered family child care providers in Maryland has been declining precipitously for more than two decades, from a high of more than 12,000 in 1996 to just over 4,300 in 2023. The declining number of family child care homes brings a tremendous degree of unmet need.

Legislation passed by this Committee in 2021 created a low-cost, time-limited pilot program (known as GOFCC) to increase the supply of family child care programs and ensure the sustainability of new and existing ones, particularly within underserved communities. That pilot program has achieved and documented remarkable outcomes, ultimately helping expand the supply of quality child care while supporting the efforts of low-income women—many in communities of color—to establish successful small businesses.

Here are some top-line results: Following an initial planning and grant award process, GOFCC began operating in September 2022. Since then, 320 participants have been engaged in five regions around the state. The duration of time between the beginning of the

application process to licensing has been shaved, on average, from between 12 - 18 months to approximately 5 months—encouraging more prospective providers to see the process through and creating new child care slots at a faster pace.

Of the 320 participants, 101 have achieved final licensing, adding 796 child care slots. An additional 81 participants are in the late stages of gaining final licensing approval, representing another 648 prospective child care slots. The remaining participants are still progressing through the process, with the potential to add more than 1,104 new slots.

These figures, impressive as they are, address only the start-up/licensure component of GOFCC. The program has also worked extensively and successfully to ensure that the new child care enterprises are well-versed in business sustainability practices and engaged in the State's child care quality enhancement initiatives. For more information about GOFCC's results, please contact MFN Public Policy Director Beth Morrow at [bmorrow@marylandfamilynetwork.org](mailto:bmorrow@marylandfamilynetwork.org)

SB 882 will make our commitment to this program permanent and ensure that our State builds on its remarkable success. MFN urges your favorable consideration.

# **SB882 King Sponsor Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Senator Nancy King

Position: FAV

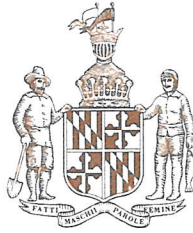
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Senate Bill 882 – Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment**

February 23, 2024

Mister Chairman and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

Even prior to the pandemic, the number of Family Child Care Programs had been on the decline. These programs, which are different from Child Care Centers, are typically owned and run by women who care for up to eight children at a time in their homes. In Maryland the number of these Family Child Care programs have gone from approximately 12,500 in 1996 to 4300 in 2023. This is a trend that is mirrored nationally. There are many factors that have contributed to this decline: arduous approval processes through multiple layers of governments, lack of resources and support for their small business, and difficulties accessing professional development.

In 2015, a Montgomery County program was developed to help individuals who want to start a family child care program or need help with an existing program by providing resources not readily available or in some instances not available at all. This highly successful program has helped to create new family child care centers and opened up hundreds of new child care slots in some of the highest poverty areas in Montgomery County

In 2021 legislation was passed to take this very successful program and set up a pilot program in the State. Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) administers the pilot program in concert with the State's network of child care resource centers. The results of this program have been exceptional. In the first full year of implementation, there have been 320 participants. 101 participants have received licenses which equates to 796 new child care slots. 81 participants are currently awaiting licensing decisions and 138 participants are in the process.

Participation has taken place throughout the state with:

- 95 in Baltimore City
- 55 in Baltimore, Cecil and Harford Counties
- 63 in Western Maryland
- 62 in the Eastern Shore
- 16 in Anne Arundel County
- 29 in Prince George's County

Maryland families depend on quality child care to allow parents to keep their jobs and support their families. This legislation supports not only the parents who need care for their children, but Marylanders who are trying to open and run a small business to support their families. Increasing the availability of high-quality child care is integral to the state's economic stability and this low cost, high impact program is a way to increase and retain childcare openings in Maryland.

Senate Bill 882 will make this a highly successful program a permanent program in the Department, and so I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 882.

**SB 882 - State Board - SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Zachary Hands

Position: FAV

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**TO:** Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

**BILL:** Senate Bill (SB) 882 – Education – Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment

**DATE:** February 23, 2024

**POSITION:** Support

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The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) would like to express support for Senate Bill (SB) 882 – Education – Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the reduction of licensed and registered child care programs in the State of Maryland and across the country. Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care (GOFCC) is a unique program, started in Montgomery County, which provides intense and targeted training, coaching, and resources to support interested individuals in opening a family child care business. The goal of the Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care program is to increase the supply and ensure the sustainability of family child care providers in areas with above-average rates of poverty and unemployment. GOFCC guides potential providers through the licensing and registration process while supporting them in building a strong business foundation and high-quality child care program. Participation is free and includes all the required training, provides access to knowledgeable coaches, and shares a variety of resources which will support the opening of a child care business.

Maryland Family Network (MFN), as the State Coordinating Entity of the Maryland Child Care Resource Network (MCCRN), provides grant management, oversight, and leadership of the GOFCC project at the direction of MSDE’s Division of Early Childhood. MFN developed and released the request for proposals and selected three agencies (Child Resource Connect in Central MD South counties, Abilities Network in Central MD North Counties, and The Family Tree in Baltimore City) to receive funding under this grant.

The Division of Early Childhood provides grant monitoring support for the GOFCC program, including technical assistance, monthly meetings for updates and progress, budget monitoring, processing invoices, and monitoring quarterly reports. The Division of Early Childhood used \$450,000 in state general funds for FY23 and FY24 to fund the GOFCC program, distributing \$150,000 each to three agencies and supporting two additional agencies with federal American Rescue Plan Act funds.

There has been tremendous progress since the inception of the pilot. GOFCC achieved promising outcomes from January 2023 to January 2024, with 88 programs licensed or registered (36 pending), 62 new programs enrolled in MD EXCELS, with three reaching Level 3, along with 58 programs set up to accept Child Care Scholarship program participants. GOFCC has expanded and is available in Allegany, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Caroline County, Carroll County, Cecil County, Dorchester County, Frederick County, Garrett County, Harford County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Washington County, and Wicomico County. Additional funding will provide opportunities for other Child Care Resource Centers and nonprofits to form GOFCC cohorts.

The State Board and MSDE respectfully request that the committee consider this information on **SB 882**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and Government Relations, at [Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov) or at 410-767-0504 or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at [Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov](mailto:Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov) or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.