

February 12, 2024



To whom it may concern:

I am writing to you today regarding House Bill 662 affecting child care teachers age requirements. Currently MSDE regulations state a teacher in child care is must be 19 years of age and we are hoping with the passing of this bill to lower the required age to 18 years of age.

Passing this bill would greatly help the critical staffing shortage in the child care industry. There have been several times in the past where I had employees meet all the other requirements (education and experience) but I had to turn them down for an advanced position simply because they did not meet the age requirement. These employees had worked at my child care center since they were 16 years old, giving them 2 years of hands on experience working in child care. They were both fabulous employees, dedicated, hard working and went above and beyond to complete college level courses to meet the teacher required education to then be turned down because of something out of their control. They were passed up for someone with less experience simply because of their age.

I fear for the future of the child care industry, many young students are not entering the field for various reasons but passing this bill would lift a major hurdle in advancing young child care teachers' careers and allowing them to step into a position right out of high school. This may allow them to earn a higher wage while attending school or caring for their families.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Blizzard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Blizzard

Owner/ Director

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