



March 27, 2024

SUPPORT – SB882 - Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment

Dear Delegates:

On behalf of the Anne Arundel Early Childhood Childcare Taskforce, I am writing in support of SB882 to establish Growing Family Child Care Opportunities (GOFCC) as a permanent program. The Early Childhood Childcare Taskforce is a group of stakeholders who work within the early childhood education field including government agencies, childcare providers, and nonprofits. Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman signed the executive order in February 2024 to create the taskforce, showing Anne Arundel's commitment to solving issues related to the childcare industry. This bill would help improve the number of family child care providers in our communities.

SB882 would establish the GOFCC pilot program as a permanent program and provide funding in FY26 to maintain the program. GOFCC is an essential program for supporting beginning family providers. This program supports new providers by supporting them through licensing procedures with MSDE and supports them in developing their high quality childcare programming and business foundations.

According to Maryland Family Network's 2023 Child Care Demographics report, there were 351 family child care providers in Anne Arundel County. It is predicted this number will fall to 299 providers in 2024. Child care for our birth to five population is essential for the foundations of their development, and less providers means we are unable to meet their needs. There are also steep economic impacts of the diminishing child care availability and its effect on parents. From the Counting Our Losses report from Maryland Family Network in 2016, it is estimated that absence and turnover because of child care interruptions cost Maryland employers over \$2 billion. Supporting this bill will create more availability for childcare and overall reduce negative economic impacts to Maryland's businesses.

We urge you to support SB882 - Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Pilot Program – Permanent Establishment to support family child care providers to enter the industry and to create more availability for our youngest learners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P M Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pamela M. Brown, PhD
Chair