



February 27, 2025

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 868 - Substitute Child Care Provider Pool Pilot Program - Established

We respectfully urge the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to make a favorable report on SB 868– Substitute Child Care Provider Pool Pilot Program – Established as we believe it will help to ease the early care and education workforce shortage we are facing, while improving the quality and sustainability of child care programs.

For the last two years, we have been working with child care providers in Montgomery County to improve their eligibility and readiness to participate in Pre-K expansion in the mixed delivery system. One of the biggest barriers to participation is having educators who meet the educational and credentialing requirements, which is also connected to their quality rating score in the state's EXCELS system. Educators struggle to get to enough professional development opportunities as are needed because there are not enough available substitutes to cover their classes while they attend training.

We are facing a precipitous decline in the number of registered family child care homes. According to Maryland Family Network's 2024 Child Care Demographics report, the number one reason that family child care providers left the profession is because of burnout. With limited substitutes available to help when providers are sick, going to doctors' appointments, or attending to other important matters, burnout is more likely to occur.

Launching a substitute pool pilot program will lessen the stress of the current early care and education workforce, improve their quality by allowing the time to attend professional development trainings, and ultimately improve retention and sustainability of the workforce. This in turn will result in increased access to child care for families so that parents can participate in the labor force.

Submitted on behalf of the Children's Opportunity Alliance by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Jahromi".

Laura Jahromi, Manager, Strategic Initiatives
The Montgomery County Children's Opportunity Alliance
1801 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852 | 301-450-1871 |
laura@mocochildren.org

The Montgomery County [Children's Opportunity Alliance](https://www.mocochildren.org) is a locally legislated Early Care and Education Coordinating Entity that connects our community to build an equitable, accessible, high-quality, and sustainable early childhood system that narrows disparities and puts young children on a path to reach their greatest potential.