



March 31, 2025

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1475 – Office of Child Care Advisory Council – Publicly Funded Prekindergarten – Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)

We respectfully urge the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to make a favorable report on HB 1475– Mixed Delivery Viability Act - as we believe it will make the implementation of the mixed delivery Pre-K system, as envisioned in the Blueprint for Maryland’s future, more equitable and ultimately more successful. *We support the amendments made in the House.*

As the largest county in Maryland, Montgomery County has a long way to go in order to meet goals for expanding the Pre-K system. A report commissioned by the county estimated that over 6,500 community-based Pre-K seats will be needed to serve 50% of the eligible Tier 1 three- and four-year-olds and all Tier 2 four-year-olds.ⁱ We currently have 354 seats. This is a substantial increase from 208 seats in SY24 – due in large part to technical assistance and grant application support we provided through contracted partners to 8 new participating centers. We are now continuing to support these providers in managing the reporting requirements for the Pre-K grant, as it’s a substantial burden for these small businesses. As we support these providers with their participation, it is woefully clear that many of the structures and policies of the grant itself inhibit the success of the program for community-based providers.

The inequities and barriers to success are simply too numerous to tackle one by one through legislation. We need a comprehensive review, as drafted in HB 1475, to determine the full set and best course of action for correction. The model as it exists today for private community-based providers to apply to the Maryland State Department of Education to receive Pre-K grants does not currently work for the majority of private providers in our community. We need to make investments in infrastructure to support community-based providers participation in Pre-K if we truly want to have enough Pre-K seats to meet the needs of young children and their families in our community.

Submitted on behalf of the Children’s Opportunity Alliance by

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

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The Montgomery County Children’s Opportunity Alliance 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.

ⁱ [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/FY22%20Blueprint%20Report%20FINAL%20Report%20October%202022\(2\).pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/FY22%20Blueprint%20Report%20FINAL%20Report%20October%202022(2).pdf)

