



3/18/2025

Testimony in support of Legislation: **HB 1122, Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Membership – Alterations**

Hearing before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Submitted by Michael Blackwell, St. Mary's County Library Director

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I am writing to express support for HB 1122: Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Membership – Alterations, which has now passed over to the Senate.

This legislation increases the maximum number of members of the Office of Child Care Advisory Council, adding a representative of the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators (MAPLA) to the membership of the Council.

Public libraries provide vital resources for all ages and interests. We support early childhood education and learning; we are perfect partners with early childhood educators and child care providers. Including a representative from MAPLA will help the Council's support and guide policies that enhance learning throughout Maryland.

Libraries provide critical resources and programming to support young learners, caregivers, and child care providers. Our literacy classes, interactive story times, STEM initiatives, and access to an array of print and electronic educational materials foster school readiness and lifelong learning. Our input will can add valuable contributions to ensure a comprehensive approach to early childhood education.

Many child care professionals rely on public libraries for professional development materials, business resources, and networking opportunities. A MAPLA on the Council would help strengthen these collaborations, ensuring that child care providers have continued access to high-quality materials and programming.

This bill is funding neutral but will strengthen your commitment to supporting early childhood learning and caregivers, building stronger partnerships, enhancing policy discussions, and helping young learners thrive. Thank you for your support for those learners. We ask that you favorably support this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Blackwell", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Michael Blackwell, Director, St. Mary's County Library

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