

HB 1475_MFN_FAV_Mixed Delivery_X-OVER.pdf

Uploaded by: Beth Morrow

Position: FAV



Testimony Concerning HB 1475
“Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Analysis and
Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)”
Submitted to the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
April 2, 2025

Position: Support

Maryland Family Network (MFN) supports HB 1475, which would require the Office of Child Care Advisory Council to conduct an analysis of the mixed delivery publicly funded prekindergarten system.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. We have been active in state and federal debates on child care policy and are strongly committed to ensuring that children, along with their parents, have access to high-quality, affordable programs and educational opportunities.

A cornerstone of pre-K expansion under the “Blueprint for Maryland’s Future” —the State’s landmark 2020 education reform bill—is “mixed delivery,” the principle that publicly funded pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds should be offered not solely in public schools. High-quality providers already established in their communities, such as child care programs, can receive public funds to educate pre-K students, provided that the quality of the education is the equivalent of what those pupils would receive in a public school classroom.

The importance of mixed delivery is four-fold: it allows school systems to focus funds on instruction rather than capital costs; it better meets the wrap-around care needs of working parents; it incentivizes the expansion of quality for all children served in the community-based programs, not just the pre-K population; and it avoids undermining the affordability of child care for children birth through age 3.

The principle of “mixed delivery” is a cornerstone of pre-K expansion in Maryland, but the public-private partnerships needed for mixed delivery to work have been hamstrung by barriers that prevent most high-quality child care programs from participating. An analysis of those barriers would inform strategies and help arrive at solutions.

MFN urges a favorable report on HB 1475.

Submitted by Beth Morrow, Director of Public Policy



FCCAMD Letter of Support for HB 1475 to Senate EEE

Uploaded by: Bill Hudson

Position: FAV



Date: 3/30/25

To: Senator Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
Maryland State Senate
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

From: Bill Hudson, Executive Director
Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland

Re: House Bill 1475-Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten -
Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)

Position: Support, strongly

Greetings Senator Feldman, Members of the committee,

My name is Bill Hudson, and I'm the Executive Director of the Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland. Through our ASPIRE PreK program, we represent over 95% of all FCC providers in MD's PreK system. Our providers account for over 12% of all Maryland's PreK seats in private providers, of any type. I am writing to express our strong support HB 1475.

Historically, Maryland's early childhood education developed along two largely separate paths: a public PreK system designed within our public schools and a private provider system initially structured around child care rather than education. Because of this separate evolution, rules and regulations for private providers were crafted primarily to address child care licensing, health and safety, and quality of care rather than the broader educational standards and supports developed within the public school system.

Today, Maryland's implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future seeks to blend these previously distinct systems into a unified, mixed-delivery PreK model. As a result, discrepancies that were once hidden or unproblematic have now become starkly apparent, highlighting significant differences in regulation, expectations, and especially resources.

While these historical differences explain why disparities exist, they do not justify their continuation. The recent discussions about collaborative planning time—mandated and supported for public educators but notably absent for educators in private settings—is a clear, real-time example. This disparity is not merely administrative; it directly impacts educators' effectiveness, children's educational outcomes, and, ultimately, equity and fairness across the system.

Underlying these discrepancies is a foundational issue regarding how we perceive and value the educators working in these different settings. Historically, private child care providers have been viewed primarily as caregivers rather than educators. Despite significant shifts toward educational quality, the legacy of that perception persists, influencing policy decisions and resource allocations today.

HB 1475 is precisely what Maryland needs at this moment—a structured, transparent analysis of the mixed-delivery model. It provides a thoughtful pathway to critically evaluate and reconcile these historical disparities, recognizing both the different origins of public and private PreK and their now-shared responsibility to deliver high-quality education. By confronting these underlying assumptions, we can establish clear and equitable expectations for all educators, regardless of their setting.

Supporting HB 1475 signals a commitment to moving beyond historical divisions and inequities. It represents an essential step toward a future where every educator—whether public or private—is equally respected, fairly supported, and fully empowered to give Maryland’s children the educational foundation they deserve.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I urge your favorable vote on HB 1475.

Sincerely,

Bill Hudson

Executive Director, Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland
Project Director, ASPIRE PreK Program
717-951-7902
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HB 1475 f testimony support EEE MSCCA April 2 202

Uploaded by: Christina Peusch

Position: FAV



**Caring For Maryland's Most
Important Natural Resource™**

Maryland State Child Care Association

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Email: info@mscca.org
www.mscca.org

The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) is a non-profit, statewide, professional association incorporated in 1984 to promote the growth and development of child care and learning centers in Maryland. MSCCA has over 5500 members working in the field of child care/early childhood education. We believe children are our most important natural resource and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.

Testimony: HB 1475 Office of Child Care Advisory Council-Publicly Funded Prekindergarten-Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)

Submitted to: Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

April 2, 2025

Maryland State Child Care Association enthusiastically supports HB 1475 as a critically important piece of legislation for both prekindergarten and child care. The definition of viability is to work successfully. Here is what we know about the viability right now of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future-Pillar 1 mixed delivery:

1. All Local Education Agencies in our state asked for waivers due to their inability to meet the recommendations of the mixed delivery partnership with community-based programs.
2. The AIB put forth recommendations to address barriers for community-based providers to participate in mixed delivery. Specifically in the 2023 AIB Private PreK report indicated the steps to address barriers include, *"establishing and regularly convening an Early Childhood Workgroup jointly with MSDE to discuss challenges and identify solutions to overcome the challenges to implement the Blueprint."*

HB 1475 meets this important recommendation for the next steps.

3. There is a critical workforce shortage and a 15% decline in child care programs in Maryland post COVID.
4. Child care is an economic and equity imperative; however, the business model is not sustainable without three- and four-year-olds and there will be unintended consequences to mixed delivery without analysis and collaboration. **HB 1475 requires this necessary collaboration.**
5. The Pillar 1 sliding scale implementation is confusing and divisive with potential opportunity to create a bigger gap between public schools and community-based programs, decreasing viability.
6. The State needs existing, community-based child care programs to participate in the mixed delivery system of public Pre-K to meet the goals of the Blueprint. The capacity for community-based programs is available as private providers right now in Maryland have license capacity for 206, 000 children. There are over 5,000 programs/providers participating in Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating System out of the 6,600 licensed child care programs. Thirty-five percent of the programs participating are published at Levels 3, 4, or 5, which is a requirement of participation in mixed delivery and more than 530 programs achieved Maryland Accreditation with over 1,000 more are participating in Maryland Accreditation, which equates to the higher levels of Maryland EXCELS ratings. Maryland has a wildly successful model for public Pre-K for family child care providers called the ASPIRE program to ensure family child care providers are successful partners in mixed delivery. The infrastructure exists to implement the Blueprint as intended, however **without legislation such as HB 1475, recommendations do not become reality.**

7. Maryland cannot afford to build new PreK classrooms, and it is unnecessary if we partner and work towards the quality benchmarks with equity for more providers to participate.
8. Parents do not work 6.5 hours per day, therefore child care programs, most are open 10-12 hours daily are important to the viability of mixed delivery and meet the needs of working families. Three- and four-year-olds should not be on public school buses without caring adults, without seatbelts, without bathrooms, and exposed to much older children.

Additionally, public schools' policies and practices are quite different from those in regulated childcare settings. While public schools and community-based programs fall under the authority of MSDE, they are not the same. The language and terminology used in public schools are very different from those used in community-based programs. The regulations are different. The oversight is different. The funding is different. The staff qualifications are different. The workload is different. The length of the workday is different. The interactions and relationships with families are different. Navigating these different standards at the same time and in many instances within the same Pre-K classroom with public and private pay children is complicated. HB 1475 seeks to unpack the nuances in this space and make recommendations which support all types of Pre-K programs to benefit children and families.

Most of our community-based programs are small businesses. According to the Comptroller's recent state of the economy report on child care—most childcare businesses operate on razor tight profit margins, usually less than 1%, with very little room for error. Any changes to a childcare program's overall enrollment create a ripple effect within the business and will create an economic hardship. When this happens, it is parents who pay the price, such as an increase in tuition or closing more of the childcare program and we have already lost more than 1,200 since 2020 leading to a lack of available, affordable care. To ensure parents truly have choices Maryland must continue to uphold an equitable mixed-delivery system that values a variety of high-quality early childhood learning environments in both public and private settings.

Discrepancies and inequities between State policies that regulate community-based providers and public prekindergarten providers, including differences in policies, need changes for a mixed delivery system to be successful. HB 1475 is a pathway for the viability of the system.

Inconsistencies exist related to rests or nap time, substitute teachers, day-to-day governance of prekindergarten providers, the implementation of the requirements for publicly funded prekindergarten. Inequities in the method by which private prekindergarten providers are reimbursed and whether a method of payment through forward funding would be a feasible alternative and inefficiencies in the invoicing process for private prekindergarten providers and delays in private provider payments continue to be challenging.

The timeline for the operation of a prekindergarten educational program required by the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant Program does not match the typical needs of prekindergarten students and parents, therefore does not align for success.

There are numerous feasibility concerns, including changing the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant Program guidelines after the grant agreements are complete.

The loss of community-based programs and additional prekindergarten seats due to the process through which quality rating levels in the Maryland EXCELS Program are changed, including: disciplining a prekindergarten program for an infraction by lowering the quality rating level; whether, when using a reduction of a prekindergarten provider's quality rating as a disciplinary measure, the reduction is commensurate with the severity of the infraction and the process for appealing a change in a prekindergarten provider's quality rating. We have numerous examples in writing from community-based providers conveying the loss of seats in counties.

This legislation will work for continuous support to streamline administrative processes and review opportunities to pool resources among private prekindergarten providers, including employee benefits, creating a centralized substitute teacher pool, and other benefits that might come from economies of scale.

HB 1475 includes a roadmap and finite timeline for reporting to state leaders and policy makers to improve Blueprint Pillar 1 implementation and follow the recommendations of the AIB.

MSCCA request a favorable report.

SEIU Local 500 - EEE - HB1475 - Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Elly Colmers

Position: FAV

Hearing Testimony April, 2025
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Service Employees International Union, Local 500

HB1475

Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)

SUPPORT

SEIU Local 500 represents over 20,000 working people in Maryland, Washington D.C., and Virginia. Our union represents the support staff at the Montgomery County Public School system, Family Child Care Providers, Faculty and Staff at several Maryland colleges and universities, staff at non-profits and many other working people across the region. We urge a FAVORABLE Report on HB1475, the Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act.

House Bill 1475 is a critical step in ensuring the viability of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, specifically its Pillar 1 initiative, which seeks to establish a mixed delivery system for public PreK. Based on current challenges, it is clear that the mixed delivery system must be supported by legislative action to achieve long-term success, and HB1475 will go a long way in achieving that success. Maryland cannot afford to build new PreK classrooms. Instead, it is more efficient and effective to partner with existing community-based providers, utilizing their capacity to meet the Blueprint's goals while maintaining equity.

Almost all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in Maryland have requested waivers due to their inability to meet the mixed delivery system's requirements in partnership with community-based programs. This indicates significant challenges and gaps in implementing the Blueprint as initially designed. A 2023 Accountability and Implementation Board's Private PreK report recognized these barriers and recommended establishing an Early Childhood Workgroup with MSDE to explore and address challenges in implementing mixed delivery. The Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act is a direct response to this recommendation, ensuring collaboration and systematic analysis to overcome current obstacles.

Child care is both an economic and equity issue, yet the current business model is unsustainable without including three- and four-year-olds in the system. Without careful analysis and collaboration, the mixed delivery system may lead to unintended consequences. Maryland faces a critical shortage in the early childhood workforce and a 15% decline in child care programs since the COVID-19 pandemic. The shortage of qualified personnel and the shrinking number of providers further underscores the importance of legislation like HB 1475 to stabilize and support the early childhood sector. Maryland

must work to address these challenges by ensuring the sustainability of this system through thoughtful legislative action

The current implementation of the Pillar 1 sliding scale is divisive and confusing, creating potential gaps between public schools and community-based programs. This misalignment has the potential to further decrease the viability of the mixed delivery system. HB 1475 aims to simplify and address these issues, creating a more cohesive and viable framework. While both public schools and community-based programs fall under the authority of MSDE, the disparities between their policies, funding, oversight, staff qualifications, and workdays present challenges in the mixed delivery system. There are several discrepancies and inequities between state policies regulating community-based providers and public PreK providers, including reimbursement methods, quality rating systems, and funding mechanisms. HB 1475 addresses these inconsistencies and creates a pathway for a more equitable and efficient mixed delivery system. Additionally, the legislation provides a plan to streamline administrative processes for private PreK providers, including establishing a centralized substitute teacher pool and exploring opportunities for pooling resources among providers to offer employee benefits.

HB 1475 actively engages practitioners, proximity experts, and stakeholders through the Governor's Office of Child Care Advisory Council. This collaboration ensures that feedback from public and private PreK providers, as well as child care providers, is considered in shaping future recommendations for improving the system. Importantly, this bill also includes a roadmap and a defined timeline for reporting to state leaders and policymakers, providing a structured approach to improving the implementation of Blueprint Pillar 1. This ensures accountability and continuous progress towards achieving the Blueprint's goals.

HB 1475 is vital to ensuring that Maryland's mixed delivery system for PreK education works successfully for all children, families, and providers. The legislation addresses critical issues, supports collaboration, and creates a clear framework for overcoming existing challenges.

We strongly urge the committee to return a favorable report on HB1475 to make the Blueprint for Maryland's Future a reality for all Maryland families.

HB1475_FAV_Maryland Just Power Alliance.pdf

Uploaded by: Katie Wenger

Position: FAV



Support Pre-K Expansion (HB1475)

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

We are the [Maryland Just Power Alliance](#), a coalition of 3 non-partisan community power organizations: [Action in Montgomery](#) (AIM), [Anne Arundel Connecting Together](#) (ACT), and [People Acting Together in Howard](#) (PATH), representing tens of thousands of Maryland residents. We organize with people in congregations, schools, and neighborhoods to build power for policies that make our communities more fair and livable for everyone. We are asking you to support the Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act (HB1475) for pre-K expansion when it is considered by the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee.

Expanding access to affordable Pre-K has emerged as one of the most important issues in our listening sessions with low- and middle-income families. Many of our children start kindergarten with disadvantages, and the gap widens over time. Pre-K is one of the most effective ways to reduce these educational inequities.

The Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act (HB1475) will remove barriers to pre-K expansion in community-based settings by updating the grant-making process. Creating a more accessible and robust pre-K grant system that adds more pre-K seats without removing infant and toddler seats will make a large difference for our children and families. Further, many Maryland childcare providers are small businesses. Making the grant more accessible will support small business development.

We strongly support HB1475 and are counting on you to pass a strong version of this bill out of your committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Letter_Support_HB1475_Womens_Caucus.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Kecia Munroe

Position: FAV

DEL. DANA JONES, DISTRICT 30A
President

DEL. MICHELE GUYTON, DISTRICT 42B
1st Vice-President

DEL. JENNIFER WHITE HOLLAND, DISTRICT 10
2nd Vice-President

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Parliamentarian

DEL. JACQUELINE T. ADDISON, DISTRICT 45
At Large

DEL. KYM TAYLOR, DISTRICT 23
At Large

WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

March 31, 2025

To: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

The Maryland Women's Caucus is proud to express our unanimous support for **HB1475: Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)**. This important legislation seeks to ensure that Maryland's mixed delivery, publicly funded prekindergarten system—established under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future—can effectively serve the needs of our youngest learners and the families who rely on it.

Access to quality, affordable early childhood education is a critical issue for Maryland's women, particularly for working mothers who depend on child care and early education programs to ensure their children are supported while they are in the workforce. By conducting a thorough analysis of the mixed delivery model, **HB1475** seeks to identify the strengths and challenges of this system, ensuring that it meets the needs of both children and families while expanding access to prekindergarten education.

For many Maryland women, particularly those from low-income and underserved communities, the availability and affordability of early childhood education are essential to their ability to remain in the workforce. As the primary caregivers in most households, women are disproportionately affected by gaps in the early education system. The ability to access affordable, high-quality prekindergarten programs not only supports the development of their children but also empowers women to pursue career opportunities and achieve economic independence. However, the quality and availability of these programs must be carefully assessed and adjusted to ensure all families can benefit. **HB1475 is an important step in that process.**

For these reasons, the Maryland Women's Caucus strongly urges the **Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee** to issue a favorable report for **HB1475**. By expanding access to high-quality prekindergarten education, we can improve the lives of Maryland's women and children, support working families, and foster a more equitable and prosperous Maryland for all.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to improving the lives of Marylanders.

COA_testimony_HB 1475_ Mixed Delivery Viability Ac

Uploaded by: Laura Jahromi

Position: FAV



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".

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

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)

HB1475 Mixed-Delivery Model Viability Act FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Salganik

Position: FAV



Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Testimony: HB1475 – Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)

Organization: Jewish Community Relations Council of Howard County, MD

Submitting: Laura Salganik, Chair

Position: FAVORABLE

Hearing Date: April 2, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The Jewish Community Relations Council is submitting this testimony in favor of HB1475, which requires the Office of Child Care Advisory Council within MSDE to conduct an analysis of the mixed delivery, publicly funded full-day prekindergarten delivery system.

Our Jewish tradition teaches us that we are obligated to work to improve the world and to help our neighbors in need. At present, the need for prekindergarten options is great – the number of child care slots available in Maryland has declined since the pandemic -- and it is even greater for parents with a low income. According to Maryland Family Network, the average annual cost for a 2–4-year-olds is about \$12,000 for family day care and \$14,000 in center-based day care. That is simply unaffordable for most single parents and for a large percentage of married parents. Existing programs such as Head Start and the Maryland Childcare Scholarship Program go only so far to meet this need.

Prekindergarten education has consistently been shown to improve children’s chances for success in school (as well as keeping them safe while their parents are at work). Further, a robust child care system is essential for our economy to thrive. Recent estimates of how much Maryland’s economy loses because of lack of stable, affordable child care are in the billions.

Recognizing its importance, the Maryland Blueprint called for “expanding voluntary prekindergarten for all three- and four-year-old children from families earning incomes at or below 300% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)” through a mixed-delivery model, with a phased-in goal of having 50 percent of the slots served through the program be in private-provider setting by 2026-7.

But it isn’t a simple process, as Maryland has learned during early implementation. None of the state’s providers have come anywhere close to meeting this goal. A careful analysis of how to combine private and public providers in a mixed delivery system – as called for in this bill – is an essential first step to a prekindergarten system that both supports economic growth in Maryland and helps our neighbors in need.

The Jewish community also has a particular interest in the separation of church and state. With many existing privately child care providers connected to religious institutions, we hope the study will include issues related to maintaining this separation in education.

We urge the committee to give a favorable report to this important legislation.

MDAC - 2025 - HB1475 - FAV-EEE.pdf

Uploaded by: Liz Zogby

Position: FAV



**HB1475 Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten –
Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)
Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee
April 2, 2025
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition (MDAC) is a coalition of the five Down syndrome organizations in Maryland as well as individuals with Down syndrome and their family members who have come together to advocate for improved quality of life for all individuals with Down syndrome throughout the state of Maryland.

MDAC strongly supports HB1475, requiring the Office of Child Care Advisory Council to conduct an analysis of a mixed delivery model for publicly funded prekindergarten in Maryland as envisioned by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. As the complex challenges associated with realizing this vision have become more apparent, a thorough analysis conducted by a group of experts and stakeholders like the Council is essential. The bill as amended ensures that the analysis explicitly includes some of the challenges identified by the Blueprint Special Education Workgroup, for which MDAC co-chair Liz Zogby serves as co-chair.¹

A mixed delivery system is a tremendous opportunity for improving outcomes for children with disabilities. This strategy was affirmed by 2023 joint policy guidance on inclusive early childhood programs from the US Departments of Education and Health & Human Services which notes:

“IDEA’s FAPE and LRE requirements should not be interpreted as prioritizing or allowing IDEA preschool special education and related services to be delivered only in preschool programs operated in a public-school building; child care, Head Start, other publicly-funded, and private early childhood settings can be used to provide FAPE.... A mixed delivery system of public and private high-quality early childhood programs is vital in increasing the availability of inclusive opportunities for children with disabilities.”²

Inclusion of young children with disabilities in early childhood programs is critical because of the known trajectory for students who begin in segregated settings. As Erik Carter of Baylor University

¹ The Workgroup (<https://blueprint.marylandpublicschools.org/special-education-workgroup/>) recommended that MSDE develop a plan “to meet the specific challenges of Pre-K expansion and a mixed delivery system that will meet the needs of students with disabilities, including recruiting and preparing private Pre-K providers, transportation, and facilities requirements.”

² U.S. Departments of Education and Health & Human Services, (Nov. 2023). *Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs*, p.12.
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ecd/policy-statement-on-inclusion.pdf>, IDEA refers to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. FAPE refers to the “free and appropriate public education” to which students with disabilities are entitled. LRE refers to the “least restrictive environment,” the legal requirement that students with disabilities be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with their nondisabled peers.

has noted, “Early segregation does not merely predict later segregation; it almost ensures it.”³ To create a mixed delivery system that intentionally includes children with disabilities, we must examine the specific barriers and challenges to this implementation.

MDAC appreciates that the bill as amended includes specific items to address these issues:

“how best to use publicly funded prekindergarten to provide a quality early childhood education for students with and without disabilities together in the same classrooms, including by developing methods to best:

- (i) combine federal, State, and local funding sources available for children in a publicly funded prekindergarten context to maximize support for all children;*
- (ii) improve teacher and staff training and recruitment to address the needs of students with and without disabilities; and*
- (iii) foster collaboration between public and private prekindergarten providers in delivering specialized transportation and services for students with disabilities.”*

For these reasons, MDAC appreciates the introduction of this important bill and strongly supports its passage.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Zogby
Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition
katzogby@gmail.com
443-691-1755

³ Carter, E. W. (2015). What matters most: Toward a future of flourishing. TASH Connections, 41(3) 10-20.

HB 1475_Testimony in support_EEE.pdf

Uploaded by: Lois Mikkila

Position: FAV

Education, Energy & Environment Committee

April 2, 2025

**House Bill 1475
Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act**

SUPPORT

The Association of Community Services (ACS) of Howard County, a 501c3 nonprofit, is a membership organization of seventy-seven nonprofit agencies in our community. Our members provide critical services ranging from housing to food assistance, mentoring, legal services, transportation, elder care, and more for our county residents.

Pillar One of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future seeks to improve access to prekindergarten education through a mixed delivery system of public and private providers. Unfortunately, it does not account for the significant operational and financial implications private providers face in participating. There are significant discrepancies in the State codes that regulate private and public prekindergarten providers, and in the implementation requirements for both, that make it more difficult for private providers.

House Bill 1475 will provide a critical analysis of the mixed delivery prekindergarten system in Pillar One to identify areas that need to be aligned between private and public prekindergarten providers. Given the critical need for quality prekindergarten programs in our community, it is imperative that this analysis is done so that the mixed-delivery model will be successful, and private providers are not disadvantaged in its implementation.

ACS strongly supports HB 1475, the Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act.

Submitted by,

Lois K Mikkila

Lois K Mikkila
Executive Director
Association of Community Services of Howard County
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HB1475.Council.Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel London

Position: FAV



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
HB 1475: Office of Child Care Advisory Council – Publicly Funded Prekindergarten –
Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)
April 2, 2025

Position: Support AS AMENDED

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to lead the lives they want with the support they need. As such, we are closely involved in policy, practice, and legal changes that increase access to quality and quality child care where children with and without disabilities learn, play, and succeed together. As such, we support HB 1475, **as amended**.

WHAT does this legislation do?

- Requires the Office of Child Care Advisory Council to conduct an analysis of the mixed delivery, publicly funded prekindergarten system established under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

WHY is it important?

- **Increasing access to early care and education for Maryland's children is critical for their development.** This is particularly true for young children with disabilities who need more access and opportunity to learn and play alongside their peers without disabilities.
- Eligible three and four-year-old children with disabilities should be able to participate in public and private regular early childhood programs and settings with their non-disabled peers with meaningful access to the general education early childhood curriculum. **This leads to improved child outcomes on critical school readiness skills, resulting in a narrowing of the performance gap with non-disabled peers.**
- By conducting an analysis, the Office of Child Care can identify solutions to challenges, and create a path forward, to help even more Maryland families. **By including specific analysis of issues affecting access to early care and education for young children with disabilities, the mixed delivery system can be more effective for all children.**

Contact: Rachel London, Executive Director, RLondon@md-council.org

HB 1475 mixed delivery viability act.pdf

Uploaded by: RANDI ALBERTSEN

Position: FAV



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My name is Randi Albertsen. I own Innovations in Education, LLC. We provide professional development and consulting for early childhood programs. I am testifying in favor of HB 1475, the Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act.

I have worked as a grant writer and consultant for childcare programs participating in the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant program since 2008, when it was called Preschool for All. Over the past 17 years, there have been many changes to the grant program and application. The application process has always been time-consuming and burdensome for childcare programs that typically lack the experience and time to write and manage this grant successfully. After the Blueprint for Maryland's Future was passed, the application and implementation of this grant has become even more time-consuming and burdensome.

HB 1475 is necessary to address these burdens and the increasing inequities between community-based programs and LEAs during the application and implementation of the grant. By conducting an in-depth analysis of the mixed delivery system, including grant policies, licensing regulations, and quality assurance measures, all parties will better understand what is working and what inequities need to be addressed. This analysis aims to identify solutions and strategies to remove the inequities and barriers to participation in the Prekindergarten Expansion/ Blueprint grant program, creating a smoother, more equitable mixed-delivery system. While there are many existing inequities in the grant program, I will touch on a few that are most impactful and burdensome.

To begin with, the timing of the release of the grant application is not aligned with the business practices of Maryland's childcare programs. Adjusting the timeline of the release of the grant applications and the notification of awards is more closely aligned with the registration and enrollment cycles of our childcare programs. Childcare programs typically begin enrollment for the following school year in January. Currently, the Department does not release the grant application until early spring. When award notifications are distributed in April and May, most childcare programs are already fully enrolled for the following year. It is unaffordable for these small businesses to reserve

slots for the prekindergarten grant program without a guarantee that they will be awarded the grant. This creates barriers for childcare programs to participate in the mixed delivery system.

Additionally, when the grant application is released with the Grant Information Guide, it spells out the purpose of the grant and the expectations of implementing this grant. A program that chooses to apply for funding does so in good faith, identifying the goals and activities it will implement during the school year. The Department then releases a Program Operation Guide AFTER the grant has been awarded. For each of the past three years, new rules and expectations have been written in the Operation Guide, which were not included in the application guidelines. In most cases, these new rules have placed an additional financial burden on the programs or have forced the programs to change their day-to-day operations. In some cases, the new rules contradict the licensing regulations that community-based programs are required to follow.

Forward funding of the grant funds is another remedy under consideration in this bill that will remove another barrier to participation. Currently, the grant is a reimbursement model. Childcare programs can apply for a 15% advance for funding. This covers about 6 weeks of the school year. By the end of September, that funding has run out. By October 1, the childcare program must rely on reserve or emergency funds to pay its staff and fund its daily operations. The program incurs all expenses during the month of October, then submits for reimbursement by the 15th of November. The Department states they have 6 weeks to process these invoices. Assuming there are no questions regarding the invoice, the earliest the program will receive reimbursement for its October expenses is mid-December. In the meantime, they have now had to rely on their reserve funding for the entire month of October, November, and half of December.

No other industry or small business is expected to operate this way. LEAs are not expected to operate this way. This creates an intense financial burden for the childcare program and is another barrier to participation in the mixed delivery system. In the same way that a landlord collects rent up front, at the beginning of the month, childcare programs collect tuition from their families at the beginning of the month to cover the expenses for that month. Requiring childcare programs to wait almost three months for reimbursement of their operating expenses is unconscionable.

Many other processes and procedures identified in this bill should be given careful consideration for how they currently hinder, create additional burdens, and/or are inequitable between public prekindergarten and community-based programs. This

includes the language, guidance, and formatting of the application, accessibility of the application and grant guidance in languages other than English, the rules and expectations regarding nap time and substitutes, and how quality ratings impact program participation in this grant program.

As this is a no cost proposal with long-term benefits to the mixed-delivery system, I urge you to consider a favorable report for HB 1475 to right these inequities, remove some of the barriers and burdens placed on childcare programs, and identify strategies to create a smoother, more inclusive process for childcare programs who want to participate in the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant Program.

HB 1475 to Senate EEE.pdf

Uploaded by: RUBY DANIELS

Position: FAV



**Bill Number: HB 1475 Office of Child Care Advisory Council – Publicly Funded
Prekindergarten – Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)
Submitted to: Education, Energy, and Environment Committee**

Position: Favorable

April 2, 2025

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

My name is Ruby Daniels, President of the Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA), representing over 4,000 licensed family child care providers across the state. On behalf of our association and the hardworking educators in community-based settings, I am writing in strong support of HB 1475.

This bill is critical to ensuring that the **Blueprint for Maryland's Future**, specifically Pillar 1's mixed delivery model, becomes viable and equitable for all stakeholders. Without action, family childcare programs—many of which are small, woman- and minority-owned businesses—risk being left behind.

Here's what we know:

- **The Blueprint's goals cannot be met without us.** Community-based programs, including family child care, have the capacity to serve over 206,000 children. Yet, less than 10% of publicly funded Pre-K seats are in private settings. We are ready—but not yet included equitably.
- **There is a disconnect between vision and implementation.** Many local education agencies have requested waivers, unable to meet the 30% mixed delivery requirement. HB 1475 creates the space for structured analysis and accountability to bridge this gap.
- **The current system lacks consistency and equity.** Discrepancies in policies between public schools and community-based providers—from regulations and workforce expectations to reimbursement methods—hinder participation. Providers face delayed payments, changing grant guidelines, and unclear program expectations.
- **The workforce crisis is real.** Maryland has experienced a 15% decline in licensed childcare programs since the pandemic. Family childcare providers operate on razor-thin margins. Without three- and four-year-olds in our care, we cannot sustain our programs, and families lose vital access to flexible, full-day, relationship-based care.
- **Parents need choices and hours that work.** Most family childcare homes are open 10–12 hours a day, unlike the 6.5-hour school day. We offer transportation, meals, continuity of care, and a nurturing environment that complements—not competes with—public school settings.



**Maryland State
Family Child Care
Association**

www.msfccca.org

HB 1475 is not just a bill—it is a **necessary blueprint for how we move forward together**. It centers the voices of providers, creates a roadmap for improving mixed delivery, and requires collaboration among MSDE, the AIB, and community experts through the Governor's Office of Child Care Advisory Council.

We urge the committee to support HB 1475 so that Maryland's families have real choices, providers have a seat at the table, and the promise of the Blueprint can be fulfilled equitably.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruby Daniels

President, Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA)

HB1475 Howard Co BOE Testimony 040225 for EEE - Mi

Uploaded by: Staff Howard County

Position: FAV



**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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*Superintendent,
Secretary/Treasurer*

**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
April 2, 2025**

HB1475: FAVORABLE

**Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Analysis
and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)** as a well-informed study that would take a needed look at the implementation of the early childhood pillar of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

HB1475 requires the Office of Child Care Advisory Council within the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to conduct an analysis of the mixed delivery, publicly funded prekindergarten program under the Blueprint. The bill further requires that the Council solicit feedback from public prekindergarten providers, private prekindergarten providers, and child care providers who have elected not to participate in the publicly funded prekindergarten program. An interim report would be due by June 1, 2026, which must include results of the analysis, including recommendations for changes to regulations, policies, and procedures to increase the efficacy of the publicly funded prekindergarten program and to make the program more equitable for providers and families. By December 31, 2027, the Council must submit a final report to the General Assembly on the results of the analysis, any changes made by MSDE in response to the recommendations in the interim report, and any additional recommendations from the Council for changes to regulation, policies, procedures, or statute regarding the mixed delivery, publicly funded prekindergarten system.

HB1475 is extensive in its requirements for items the Council must review, but accurately depicts the many questions and concerns raised by both public and private providers in implementing the early childhood pillar of the Blueprint. Much of what is included in the study addresses barriers to participation on behalf of providers and would be welcome information to drive decisions and policy moving forward.

It has become clear that the private preschool and prekindergarten providers voice was unfortunately missing during the drafting and implementation of Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The passage of HB1475 and subsequent report would be an important step to understanding what changes can be enacted to realize a fully functioning public/private partnership for the provision of high quality prekindergarten for three and four year olds in Maryland.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report on HB1475 from this Committee.

MD Catholic Conference_HB 1475_FWA SENATE CROSS.pd

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: FWA



April 2, 2025

HB 1475

Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)

Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Position: FAVORABLE w/ Amendment

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this supporting testimony with amendments to House Bill 1475. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government. There are more than 50,000 students served by over 150 PreK-12 Catholic schools in Maryland.

House Bill 1475 would require the Office of Child Care Advisory Council within the State Department of Education to conduct an analysis of the mixed delivery, publicly funded prekindergarten system established under Title 7, Subtitle 1A of the Education Article. The analysis would result in recommendations for changes to regulations, policies, and procedures to increase the efficacy of the publicly funded prekindergarten program and to make the program more equitable for providers and families. A report to the General Assembly would be due by December 31, 2027.

Nonpublic school prekindergarten providers have received mixed- delivery prekindergarten expansion grant sites in the first round of expansion in 2022, winning competitive grant bids for programs to provide prekindergarten to four-year-old children whose family income is 300% of the federal poverty level (FPL) or lower. Nonpublic providers have the capacity to offer high quality seats at our programs and are enthused to continue to partner with the state of Maryland in advancing the educational vision of the Kirwan Commission through mixed-delivery prekindergarten expansions. That is why 50% of slots are dedicated to private providers in the Blueprint prekindergarten expansion.

These sites include Catholic schools who are partnering with the State of Maryland to provide high-quality prekindergarten to low-income students. Catholic providers have long participated in and supported prekindergarten expansion in Maryland. All three of (arch)dioceses serving Maryland have a strong commitment to education. Within the State of Maryland, there are approximately 120 prekindergarten programs in Catholic schools or

parishes, in addition to Headstart programs. Nearly all are accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by MSDE and a vast majority of them employ state-certified prekindergarten teachers. Many are EXCELS level three, four and five-rated. However, some added flexibility for expansion sites would certainly accelerate Maryland's ambitious prekindergarten expansion goals.

A strong prekindergarten education has been proven to greatly enhance a child's educational trajectory. Like early childhood care, it is also an essential component to supporting strong, economically secure families. Prekindergarten availability also helps to empower working parents with workplace access, an imperative part of combating poverty.

If this legislative body wants to expand the participation of high-quality faith-based providers participating in Blueprint expansion, we respectfully urge the analysis provided for through this legislation to include a review of the requirements for faith-based providers in the law, with a view toward ascertaining in particular if those provisions are deterring high-quality programs from applying for expansion grants.

Amendment to House Bill SB 1475 (Third Reader Reprint)

Amendment No. 1

On Page 3, line 22 of the House Third Reader Reprint, insert:

“(15) A review of the provisions of § 7-1A-04(c) relative to faith-based providers and opportunities to engage and recruit more faith-based community providers already operating EXCELS-rated high quality prekindergarten programs to apply for expansion grants.”

HB1475- State Board- LOI- Crossover.pdf

Uploaded by: Madeline Houck

Position: INFO

TO: Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment

BILL: HB 1475 - State Department of Education – Office of Child Care Advisory Council- Publicly Funded Pre-K – Analysis and Report

DATE: April 02, 2025

POSITION: Letter of Information

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding House Bill (HB) 1475 - State Department of Education – Office of Child Care (OCC) Advisory Council – Publicly Funded Pre-K – Analysis and Report. This legislation requires the OCC Advisory Council to conduct an analysis and report of the mixed delivery, publicly funded pre-kindergarten system established under the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, and generally relating to an analysis of the mixed delivery, publicly funded pre-kindergarten program.

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) anticipates that House Bill (HB) 1475 will have an impact on the agency in that the Office of Child Care (OCC) Advisory Council consists of voluntary members who meet every quarter to discuss a multitude of child care-related concerns, not just one specified topic. The proposed bill would lead to the meeting only addressing the publicly funded prekindergarten analysis and the report, and possibly lead to the need for council members to volunteer additional time to meet the bill's stipulations. The council members consist of legislators, physicians, child care providers, and other government officials, many of whom may be subjected to time constraints associated with meeting the demands of their full-time positions. In addition, the agency staff member assigned to assist in the preparation of the council meetings cannot take on another function without removing duties assigned based on the current MS22. As a result of the proposed bill, the assigned staff member may need to increase their allotted time to support the proposed legislation, or an additional FTE may be required to meet the requirements of the council, as determined by HB 1475.

In addition, on September 15, 2024, MSDE and the Maryland Department of Commerce conducted a blind survey of public and private prekindergarten and child care providers and submitted a report to the budget committees detailing the findings from the survey and the options to address the identified barriers. The survey requested information about the factors preventing providers from participating in publicly funded prekindergarten programs and the reasons that providers choose not to participate.

Please also note that the OCC Advisory Council's current duties consist of the following per Md. Code, Educ. § 9.5-804:

The Council shall:

- (1) Advise and counsel the Early Childhood Development Division of the Department;
- (2) Review regulations proposed by State agencies regulating child care to ensure coordination and consistency;
- (3) Review issues and problems relating to care of children and suggest priorities for consideration by the Early Childhood Development Division; and
- (4) Identify interdepartmental issues of importance to child care providers and users that should be

addressed by the Early Childhood Development Division and other State agencies.

Currently, OCC Advisory Council quarterly meetings include child care updates from the team and the opportunity for the child care community to ask the directors questions about “all things” concerning child care in real time, which will no longer be an option due to the discontinuation of the meeting for frequent guests and attendees. The information shared during typical meetings is considered highly valuable and applicable to child care; this will no longer be the platform for a considerable amount of time, leaving the Early Childhood Community with a limited number of opportunities to have questions answered regularly. MSDE would like to refrain from creating a narrative that Pre-K is more important than the other concerns regarding care for children under 5 years of age. Noting that there is an overwhelming number of constituents who fear that Pre-K funding hurts private providers who do not participate and decreases the options for families seeking care for children under 2 years of age.

We request that the committee consider this information as it deliberates **HB 1475**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and External Relations, at Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov or at 410-767-0504, if you would like any additional information.