



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

Maryland State Child Care Association

2810 Carrollton Road
Annapolis, Md. 21403
Phone: (410) 820-9196
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 785: Common Ownership Communities and Zoning Authorities - Operation of Family
Child Care Homes - Limitations Hearing
Submitted to: Environment and Transportation Committee**

Feb 18, 2025

Maryland State Child Care Association fully supports HB 785.

Family child care programs are essential to the workforce and communities. Licensed family child care is an intimate early childhood education and care environment practiced in a residential setting. HB 785 establishes the distinction of family child care as a residential and preferred activity.

Family child care is conducted in homes and has been critical in supporting working families in developmentally appropriate settings. Research shows that high quality child care not only results in positive development for children, access to child care also increases labor force participation for parents of young children, especially mothers. Child care is an economic driver and increasing child care access in Maryland can help reduce declines in Maryland's Labor Participation Rates.

According to the Comptroller of Maryland recent State of the Economy report from December 31, 2024, [childcare state of economy dec 31 2024 md comptroller.pdf](#), Maryland has lost hundreds of child care programs, especially those run by sole-proprietors out of their homes that serve high percentages of infants and toddlers. There has been a steady and sustained decline in family care providers in Maryland, which likely affects access for child care for infants the most, as well as toddlers.

Additionally, many areas of the state have child care deserts where child care, especially family child care is needed. Maryland is a very culturally diverse state with many immigrant family child care providers who are trusted members of the community who speak the language and embrace the culture of children they educate and families they proudly serve. Maryland must support residential licensed child care options and decrease the unnecessary restrictions outlined in HB 785.

This important legislation addresses the restrictions related to operating or starting a family child care program found in leases, articles of incorporation or bylaws of cooperative housing corporations. We understand the necessity for covenants and bylaws for our communities, however, HB 785 is comprehensive legislation which ensures family child care providers adhere to the strict staff child ratios and all the Maryland State Department of Education COMAR regulations related to family child care. Additionally, the bill speaks to family child care contributing fair fees and requirements for liability insurance.

Child care is an important economic and equity imperative and child care providers are the backbone of society. HB 785 recognizes and addresses the barriers for family child care programs in residences to conduct their programs successfully. It also supports the growth of family child care in our neighborhoods and communities as they are the fabric of family support, while also driving the economy. Maryland cannot afford to lose more child care options for families to work, attend school or training programs. The time to act is now.

MSCCA urges for a favorable report.