



February 9, 2025

Dear Distinguished Members of the House and Senate,

I am a family childcare provider that has been closely following bill HB0785 for many good reasons.

I strive for quality in my program and have converted a special space in my home into a classroom that is capable of accommodating up to 12 children. I've obtained both bachelor's and master's degrees in education, as well as Maryland teaching certificates for Pre-K3 through grade 6. I have achieved a level 4 out of 5 in Maryland's quality incentive program EXCELS thus far and am actively working towards NAFCC accreditation. I also am a level 6 out of 6 credentialed Maryland family childcare provider. I am a member of ASPIRE which is a program under the Family Childcare Alliance of Maryland who works with family childcare providers to provide quality pre-kindergarten spots to low-income families under the Maryland Pre-Kindergarten Expansion grant.

Despite all of these accomplishments that have greatly benefited the families I've been lucky enough to work with, my city zoning ordinances are preventing me from having the 12 spots for children I'm capable of accommodating. They are limiting me to 8, which is 4 less than what the state childcare regulations are for large family childcare homes.

As I'm sure you are aware there is a severe childcare shortage across the United States, but I'd like to share with you a few of the specifics from the Maryland Comptroller's State of Economy for 2024. The amount of childcare spots available has decreased by 5.5% since 2020, that's over 12,000 children added to childcare waitlists across Maryland. Three out of five parents in Maryland who aren't working said they would do so if they had access to childcare. There are 4,118 family childcare providers in Maryland, this is 61% of childcare providers across the state, but only accommodates 16% of the childcare spots available. There are 2,631 centers that provide spots for the other 84%.

Let's say only half of these 4,118 family childcare providers desire to increase their capacity from 8 to 12 children if bill HB0785 passes. We would see a whopping increase of 8,236 childcare slots. Not only that, but it would provide a full-time employment position for the childcare assistant needed to run these programs, totaling 2,059 more jobs in the childcare workforce for Maryland.

Childcare access is important for increasing state revenue, earning potential for women, and greater economic security. Not only this, but the children are reaping extreme benefits from attending educational programs and socially interacting with their peers. The earlier a child attends a quality educational program, the better off they are socially, academically, and emotionally throughout life. This in-turn benefits the economy as a whole when these children become adults. They will less likely need government financial assistance, have a lower criminal activity rate, and will have higher paying careers.

So, please I am asking for the great benefit of families, providers, and citizens of Maryland please pass Bill HB0785. We need to expand our reach of quality childcare to ensure a bright future, it relies in the way we are shaping our youngest and most important members, our children.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Brittany Truitt

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