



February 8, 2025

House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for HB 785: Common Ownership Communities and Zoning Authorities - Operation of Family Child Care Homes - Limitations

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland, I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 785. This legislation addresses several barriers that prevent qualified family child care providers from operating in cooperative housing, condominiums, and homeowner associations. Importantly, it also addresses a significant challenge in some Maryland counties where local zoning regulations make it extremely difficult to open large family child care homes that can serve up to 12 children.

The child care crisis in Maryland requires multiple solutions, and family child care homes are a vital part of our early care and education infrastructure. When experienced providers are prevented from expanding to serve more families through large family child care homes, it reduces the availability of quality child care options, particularly for infants and toddlers where care is hardest to find.

HB 785 would prevent housing associations from banning family child care homes or restricting them below state-authorized enrollment levels, while maintaining reasonable protections like insurance requirements and modest fees for common area usage. The bill also ensures that local zoning regulations cannot be used to limit the number of children served below state education department standards, removing a significant barrier that currently prevents some providers from expanding their programs.

This balanced approach:

- Increases access to quality child care by allowing successful providers to serve more families
- Supports the growth of small businesses
- Maintains appropriate safety standards and community protections

- Creates consistency between local regulations and state education standards
- Recognizes family child care as a residential rather than commercial activity

The bill thoughtfully addresses community interests while removing unnecessary barriers that limit child care options. At a time when Maryland families struggle to find affordable, quality child care, passage of HB 785 will help grow the supply of child care spaces in the state.

We urge a favorable report on HB 785.

Sincerely,

Bill Hudson

Executive Director

Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland

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