

**Testimony on Family Connect bills
SB156 and HB334**

January 27, 2025

Jamie Diggs
9395 Highlander Blvd.
Walkersville, MD 21793
Scrappydoo26@verizon.net

POSITION: FAVORABLE

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of the Family Connect bills SB156 and HB334.

I am a 43-year-old mother of three children, a one year old son, 15 year old daughter and 25 year old daughter. I am married and work full-time and have a very busy household with sports activities, church events, all the other stuff that goes along with maintaining a family on a day-to-day basis. When my husband and I found out we were having a baby at our age we felt very blessed but also very shocked as we were not planning on having more children after our 15-year old.

My experience with Family Connect was amazing. The birth of our son was a complete blessing but starting over after all those years was a big task. When Family Connect visited me in the hospital I was overwhelmed at the time with a new baby and trying to learn to breastfeed for the first time. With this being my third child I was not sure if I would need assistance from Family Connect after I got home but I agreed to the appointment just to have an extra check on us after we got home. I was not exactly sure I would need the service since this was my third child. I was completely wrong about that assessment, and I very much needed the visit by the third week. I had so many questions. This was my first boy, new to breastfeeding and so many more questions for the nurse at the time and I felt so relieved to have someone there to answer my questions, provide me information for things, and to check the baby to make sure he was thriving and doing well. The nurse was very kind and patient. She did not rush our visit and was very warm and gentle with both of us.

I found the support very valuable. I did not realize how much I needed that visit and the information the nurse provided. There were things I was doing that I just needed her to tell me I was doing it correctly and to reassure me. I did not have this opportunity with my first and second child and I very much appreciate the opportunity with my third child to have Family Connect visit to check on my family and answer all my questions. I even had more questions after we started talking in conversation and after the visit I felt powerful again as a mom. With little sleep, hormones adjusting and a tiny little baby to care for your power can very easily diminish so it was very valuable to have someone check on you and help you with your needs.

All mothers should have access to this program. Having a baby whether it's your first or third time is a lot of work, and each baby is different. It doesn't matter your social status, income, or anything a mom needs that check up and help. It may be just questions answered or a little more deeper but it is very important. It is a tool to keep mothers and their children healthy. It allows mothers to have an extra layer of assistance in the first few weeks which are very critical when you have a new baby.

There are so many adjustments in your life at this point and Family Connect is a tool and resource to help mothers be successful in taking care of themselves and their new baby. To have that initial interaction at the hospital to set up the appointment you don't have to do anything else after that. You have enough on your plate when you leave and appointments to set up, so when you set up the appointment in the hospital you do not have to do anything else. It is a gift to a mom of a new baby.