

Maryland State Child Care Association

2810 Carrollton Road
Annapolis, Md. 21403
Phone: (410) 820-9196
Email: info@mscca.org
www.mscca.org

Caring For Maryland's Most Important Natural Resource™

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 696: State Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, and Workgroups- Elimination of Citizenship Requirements and Establishment of Diversity Requirements

Submitted to: Health and Government Operations Committee

Feb 25, 2025

Maryland State Child Care Association supports HB 696.

HB 696 is asking for equity and diversity in composition of Boards and Commissions membership, which is reflective of priorities and challenges, as well as inclusive of diverse practitioners, specifically residents and individuals of the state and community.

Boards and Commissions work behind the scenes to meet their charge and often play an essential role in state governance. Maryland is a very diverse state, and we must recognize and embrace this fact. Members of Boards, whether appointed, elected, or volunteers, should reflect not only geographic diversity of their state, but represent diversity comprehensively in its many forms.

Semantics matters, consistent language matters, diversity, inclusiveness and representation matters. Our society has become divided over certain words that we used to be proud to say. Now is the time to act to ensure our very diverse residents and individuals are represented on Boards and Commissions without compromising any requirements germane or relevant to each Board or Commission, only to refine by:

- Expanding membership criteria to reflect the “full diversity of the State;”
- Replace the word “citizen” with “resident” or “private individual”, and
- Establish consistency throughout the code.

Board composition is at the heart of board effectiveness. Progressive boards should continuously consider whether they have the optimum composition. Effective boards are comprised of members who reflect the priorities and challenges of the business, the relevant areas of risk, and the diversity of stakeholders.

MSCCA urges a favorable report for HB 696.