



To: Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair  
House Ways and Means Committee

From: Bill Hudson, Executive Director  
Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland

Re: House Bill 1475-Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten -  
Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)

Position: Support, strongly

Greetings Delegate Atterbeary, Members of the committee,

My name is Bill Hudson, and I'm the Executive Director of the Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland. Through our ASPIRE PreK program, we represent over 95% of all FCC providers in MD's PreK system. Our providers account for over 12% of all Maryland's PreK seats in private providers, of any type. I am writing to express our strong support HB 1475.

At first glance, this bill might appear to focus solely on technical details and PreK, but the significance of HB 1475 extends far beyond these specifics. The work resulting from this bill will provide greater data, insights and clarity necessary for legislators and regulators to make informed, precise, and economically responsible decisions about MD's child care industry.

This is of critical importance because child care is not just a social service; it's a highly regulated and foundational component of Maryland's economic infrastructure. Decisions made about this industry directly affect the state's workforce participation, particularly for working mothers. The recent report from Maryland's Comptroller highlighted the importance of child care to the state's economic growth, as well as the lack of data on this critical industry. The report noted that "these data gaps limit the ability to fully understand trends in Maryland's child care system." Without accurate data, well-intentioned policies can inadvertently destabilize the child care market.

This concern is not theoretical. In January, the State Board of Education and the Accountability and Implementation Board signed a Joint Policy that underscores the risks of policymaking without robust, accurate market data. While the policy aims to expand access to early childhood education, it is in fact, a major intervention into a critical industry, made without the data needed to reasonably predict its impact on the child care industry. The policy states:

*Public providers (public schools) focus on ensuring all eligible Tier I four-year-olds are served. And Public providers may choose to serve Tier II and III four-year-olds. Those providers that serve Tier II and III four-year-olds may choose to collect the family share, but are not required to do so.*

This essentially gives the school districts carte blanche to absorb all four year olds in those counties where the district has both the desire and capacity to do so. The policy goes on to state that:

*Private providers, including Head Start providers, focus on serving Tier I three-year-olds and Tier II and Tier III four-year-olds.*

Note, the above policy was created without the data the Comptroller noted is important to understanding trends in the child care marketplace. Unfortunately, Maryland has huge gaps in the data about the child care industry, including:

- No enrollment data for providers
- Limited data on capacity by different age groups under 5
- Incomplete data on provider types and business models
- No analysis of current vacancy patterns and causes
- No data on geographic distribution of demand vs. supply

Moreover, the Joint Policy was created without any impact or feasibility studies, or consulting the leading experts in Maryland's child care industry.

The policy essentially creates an environment where the school districts can strip away 25% of the potential clients for child care providers in a county. The problem is even more severe than it might seem in that care for infants is unprofitable for most child care providers, further straining an already fragile system. A study cost of care study published in Rhode Island stated bluntly that robust mixed age groups matter for financial sustainability: "a center serving only children birth to three years old is not financially sustainable at any size or quality level."

The effects of this policy will be felt most acutely in Maryland's smaller and more rural counties.

An analysis of overall capacity data for December 2024 from MSDE shows that ten counties depend on family child care (FCC) for more than 20% of their total child care capacity. Rounding two counties from 29% to 30% shows that six counties depend on FCC for 30% or more for total child care capacity, with Caroline County coming in at 48%. In addition, ten counties have less than 100 child care programs of any type, and five counties have less than 50 programs of any type. We highlight these facts to illustrate an economic principle: in smaller markets, even modest shifts in supply or demand can have an outsized impact. With fewer child care programs overall, any change—whether from policy shifts, economic pressures, or provider closures—hits harder. Unlike larger markets, where adjustments may be absorbed with less pain, these counties have little to no buffer, making them highly vulnerable to instability in the child care sector

Rather than expand access, I\* and other child care experts across Maryland predict the Joint Policy passed by the State Board and the AIB will destabilize the child care industry in counties around the state, causing provider closures, intensifying child care deserts, and ultimately undermining workforce participation and economic vitality.

Passing HB 1475 is a part of a proactive solution. The results of the work established by the bill will help ensure future decisions about the child care industry are data-driven, informed, and economically responsible. In short, this bill is a necessary step to protect and strengthen Maryland's economic infrastructure.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I urge your favorable vote on HB 1475.

Sincerely,

Bill Hudson  
Executive Director, Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland  
Project Director, ASPIRE PreK Program  
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\*Attached is a brief resume to support my position as an industry expert.

# Bill Hudson

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Executive Director, ASPIRE PreK Program Director**

FAMILY CHILD CARE ALLIANCE OF MARYLAND, Bowie, MD | 2020—current

*Staffed family child care network and creator of the ASPIRE PreK program, one of the nation's only statewide professional development programs for family child care providers offering publicly funded PreK.*

### **Chief Executive Officer/Founder**

FAMILY CHILD CARE ASSOCIATES, Reston, VA | 2019 -- current

*Consulting firm providing leadership, management and board development services to organizations and agencies focused on family child care businesses.*

### **Chief Executive Officer**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE, Salt Lake City, Utah | 2016 – 2019

*Professional membership organization for individuals operating child care businesses in their homes. Creator of the nation's only nationally recognized accreditation program for family child care providers.*

### **Multiple positions**

LIBRARY SYSTEM OF LANCASTER COUNTY, Lancaster, Pennsylvania | 2000 – 2015

*Federated library system composed of 14 independent, nonprofit libraries with a service area of over five hundred thousand residents.*

- **Administrator (2012 – 2015)**
- **Acting Administrator/Manager of Information Technology Services (2010 – 2012)**
- **Manager of Information Technology/Deputy Administrator (2006 – 2010)**
- **Manager of Information Technology (2000 – 2006)**

## RECENT PRESENTATIONS

- *Barriers to PreK for FCC providers in Maryland. Maryland State Office of Child Care Advisory Committee. Presenter, February 2025.*
- *PreK and Family Child Care in Maryland. Co-presenter, July 25, 2024. National Association for Family Child Care Annual Conference.*
- *What is the Blueprint/Mixed Delivery and how does it impact my child care business? Panelist,*

March 9, 2024. At the 2024 Emotional Wellness Conference. Sponsored by the Baltimore City Child Care Resources Center at The Family Tree.

- *Blueprint for Maryland's Future Townhall Meeting*. Co-presenter. February 22, 2024. Sponsored by Montgomery County and others.
- *Unchartered Waters: The Marriage of Public Schools and Private Child Care Sector*. Co-presenter. October 3, 2023. Maryland Association of Boards of Education Annual Meeting.
- *Embracing Without Spacing: Pre-K Expansion and Early Childhood Education*. Co-presenter. August 19, 2023. Maryland Association of Counties Summer Conference.

## RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

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- Maryland State Board of Education Workgroup on Early Childhood Education and Care-current
- Virginia Ready Region-Capital Area, Governing Board Member-Current
- Montgomery County Cost of Quality Child Care Study. Committee member.
- Maryland Family Child Care Task Force, *Maryland State Department of Education*. Co-chair.
- Power to the Profession Initiative, *NAEYC*. Core task force member.
- National Birth to Age Eight Workforce Group, *National Academy of Medicine*. Task force member.
- Early Care and Education Innovation Collaborative, *National Academy of Medicine*. Committee member.
- Eco-Healthy Child Care, *Children's Environmental Health Network*. Steering committee member.
- Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Roundtable, *Bipartisan Policy Center*. Committee member.

## RELEVANT VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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- Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland. Founding board member, 2019-2020.
- Virginia Alliance for Family Child Care, *State level family child care association*. Board member 2019-current.
- Infant Toddler Family Day Care, *Staffed family child care network*. Served as board member.
- Main Street Child Development Center, *Nonprofit child care center*. Served as board Vice-President.

## EDUCATION

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**Bachelor of Arts in Psychology:** University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill