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To the Honorable Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

Support: HB 0325

As a former childcare Director/Operator for 48 years, and current Administrator, I would like to give my full support for HB 0325, Adult Education-High School Diploma by Examination-Requirements and Study. The field of early childhood has suffered a critical workforce shortage of early childhood educators in child care programs. This bill would support many potential childcare staff by giving them the opportunity to achieve a High School Equivalency by examination in languages other than English, in their natural language.

There is a substantial immigration community in Maryland, many who never had an opportunity to complete High School due to war time or lack of opportunity but would like to further their education by earning a high school equivalency. Being able to take the examination in the natural language spoken could help them successfully attain that goal.

Once high school equivalency is achieved, there is an opportunity to complete 90 hours of non-college credits in Child Development and Methods and Materials to qualify as a Preschool teacher in licensed child care centers. It also opens opportunities to enroll in college coursework towards earning a college degree. This could be a significant step in growing more teachers in Maryland.

Please vote this favorably to help solve the childcare staffing shortage.

Sincerely,
Flora L Gee, M.Ed.