



**Testimony in support of HB 1122: Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Membership - Alterations**  
**Hearing before the House Ways and Means Committee**  
**March 3, 2025**  
**Submitted by Tonya Aikens, Howard County Library System President & CEO**

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express support for **HB 1122: Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Membership – Alterations.**

This legislation increases the maximum number of members of the Office of Child Care Advisory Council, adding a representative of the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators to the membership of the Council.

Public libraries are asset institutions that provide vital resources for all ages and interests. One of our core missions is supporting early childhood education and learning, making public libraries perfect partners for early childhood educators and child care providers. Including a representative from the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators will significantly enhance the Council’s ability to support and guide policies that impact children, families, and child care providers across our state.

How a child talks, listens, thinks and learns are all formed prior to their school experience. How a child interacts with others, problem solves, and resolves conflicts are all shaped by early childhood experiences. As the first public classroom for many children, public libraries aid in positively shaping high-quality early childhood experiences.

Integral to the early childhood education ecosystem, public libraries provide critical resources and programming that support young learners, caregivers, and child care providers. Libraries offer a robust range of early learning services, including literacy classes, interactive story times, STEM initiatives, and access to an array of print and electronic educational materials that foster school readiness and lifelong learning. By integrating library expertise into the Council, policymakers can leverage these valuable contributions to ensure a more comprehensive approach to early childhood education.

Additionally, libraries serve as essential partners to educators and child care providers, offering curriculum support, instructional resources, and business development tools. Many child care professionals rely on public libraries for professional development materials, business resources, and networking opportunities. A representative of the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators on the Council would help strengthen these collaborations, ensuring that child care providers have continued access to high-quality, research-based materials and programming.

This bill reflects a forward-thinking vision for early childhood education—one that values information sharing and interdisciplinary cooperation. This proposal aligns directly with the Moore-Miller administration’s commitment to supporting early childhood learning and caregivers. Together, we can build stronger partnerships, enhance policy discussions, and ultimately provide a more enriched educational landscape for our youngest learners.

This bill supports the Moore-Miller Administration's priorities to set Maryland's students up for success and ending childhood poverty through a stronger and more strategic child care ecosystem.

Thank you for your support for our state's youngest learners. We ask that you **favorably recommend HB 1122** for passage.

Sincerely,

Tonya Aikens,  
President & CEO