
TO: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

BILL: HB 862 - Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment

DATE: February 21, 2025

POSITION: Letter of Information

Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding House Bill (HB) 862 - Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment. This legislation proposes to establish a Child Care Affordability Commission to study and make recommendations regarding child care affordability in Maryland.

Obtaining stakeholder feedback from the child care community in which MSDE serves is essential in the establishment and maintenance of a healthy, sustainable, and ever-growing partnership. Ensuring child care providers have the option to weigh in on their day-to-day area of expertise not only highlights their impact on a sustainable workforce, in that families throughout Maryland need a child care provider they value and trust in order to work, but it also lets the child care community know the agency cares about their success and sustainability. MSDE embodies this value by continuing to partner with the child care community via forums and outlets such as advisory council meetings, workgroups, agency-supported conferences, hosted roundtables, scheduled listening sessions, and survey opportunities.

Additionally, partnering with stakeholders allows the agency to not only obtain viable feedback and independent perspectives but also to rethink, revise, and repurpose the overall goals of an agency serving the early childhood community, which in turn impacts school readiness. Currently, the Division of Early Childhood has multiple boards and councils similar to the one outlined in HB0862 including the Office of Child Care Advisory Board, State Early Childhood Advisory Council, Early Childhood Workgroup on Early Childhood Education and Care, and the Early Childhood Education Career Ladder Workgroup. Each of these groups are comprised of providers, policy makers, educators and community advocates from across the state who provide input, information, and recommendations to MSDE Division of Early Childhood and the State Board of Education.

We request that the committee consider this information as it deliberates **HB 862**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, at Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov or at 410-767-0504, if you would like any additional information.