



Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

## Testimony in Support of HB 1475

### Submitted to the Honorable Members of the Ways and Means Committee

#### Position: Support

*The Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEOYC) supports HB 1475 - Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Pre-Kindergarten - Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability)*

March 4, 2025

MDAEOYC is a professional association of 1,700 early childhood educators, allied professionals, and families. We promote high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood education practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

As a current member of the MDAEOYC Public Policy Committee and former childcare Director/Owner for 50 years I would like to express the strong support of the members of our Association. These are our key points:

#### Testimony in Support of House Bill 1475

Dear Chair and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 1475, introduced by Delegate Feldmark. This bill is a crucial step towards enhancing the quality and equity of the publicly funded prekindergarten system in Maryland.

House Bill 1475 mandates the Office of Child Care Advisory Council to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the mixed delivery prekindergarten system. This analysis will address several critical areas:

1. **Regulatory Discrepancies:** By examining differences in regulations between private and public prekindergarten providers, we can identify and rectify inconsistencies that may hinder the effectiveness and fairness of the system.
2. **Implementation Review:** Evaluating the implementation of prekindergarten program requirements will ensure that the programs are meeting their intended goals and serving our children effectively.

3. **Reimbursement Methods:** Investigating the feasibility of forward funding and addressing inefficiencies in the invoicing process will help ensure that private providers are reimbursed promptly and fairly, promoting financial stability and sustainability.
4. **Program Alignment:** Assessing whether the timelines and guidelines of prekindergarten programs align with the needs of students and parents will help create a more responsive and supportive educational environment, as well as operations of private providers.
5. **Quality Rating Processes:** Reviewing the processes for changing quality rating levels as disciplinary action for an infraction, especially by a single employee, that lowers the required Maryland EXCELS rating that would remove a private provider program from public pre-k participation. This could leave classrooms and families without the funding promised at the beginning of the school year, disrupting the education of the enrolled students.
6. **Administrative Streamlining or Reducing Administrative Processes:** Simplifying administrative processes for providers and parents, including the enrollment process, will reduce barriers to participation and make the system more accessible and efficient for families.
7. **Language Accessibility:** Ensuring that grant applications, guidelines, and materials are available in multiple languages will support inclusivity and better serve our diverse communities.
8. **Resource Pooling:** Exploring opportunities for resource pooling among private providers can lead to cost savings and improved services through economies of scale.

The interim report due by June 1, 2026, and the final report by December 31, 2027, will provide valuable insights and recommendations for improving the prekindergarten system. This bill represents a thoughtful and proactive approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities within our prekindergarten programs.

I urge the committee to support House Bill 1475 and help ensure that all children in Maryland have access to high-quality, equitable prekindergarten education.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Flora Gee, M. Ed.  
Public Policy  
Regional Officer, Prince George's County  
Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

*If you have any questions, please contact: Stephanie Schaefer, PhD. Program Coordinator, at [stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org](mailto:stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org) or 240-441-3280 or Flora Gee, [flora.gee@mdaeyc.org](mailto:flora.gee@mdaeyc.org) or 240-375-0208.*