



**Maryland State
Family Child Care
Association**
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Written Testimony: House Bill 1421
Accountability and Implementation Board- Scope of Authority
Committee: House Ways and Means Committee
March 11, 2025

Position: Unfavorable

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ruby Daniels, and I serve as the President of the Maryland State Family Child Care Association, representing over 4,000 family childcare providers across the state. I am also an independent second-year Pre-K expansion grantee and the Chair of the Pillar 1 Advisory Committee to the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). I come before you today to express concern regarding House Bill 1421, which seeks to place the AIB under the authority of the State Board of Education and fundamentally alters the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

While accountability and oversight are necessary, I strongly believe that shifting complete authority over the Blueprint from the AIB to the State Board of Education will create significant challenges for private providers, including family childcare homes and private Pre-K programs participating in the mixed-delivery model.

Concerns with House Bill 1421

1.State Board and AIB Should Work Together, Not One Controlling the Other

The AIB was designed to be an independent body to ensure equitable implementation of the Blueprint across both public and private providers. This bill would diminish the AIB's role, giving the State Board full decision-making power, which may result in public school priorities taking precedence over private providers.

The Blueprint's success relies on strong collaboration between all stakeholders, including family childcare, private Pre-K providers, and public schools. Instead of stripping AIB's authority, we should focus on strengthening collaboration between the AIB and the State Board to ensure all providers are included in the decision-making process.

2.Potential Delays and Barriers for Private Pre-K Providers

Under HB 1421, the State Board would now oversee the approval of implementation plans, funding allocations, and compliance measures, rather than the AIB. This change risks:

Slower funding releases for private providers.

Delays in approving implementation plans, impacting the expansion of private Pre-K programs.
More bureaucratic barriers for family childcare providers, making it harder to participate in the Blueprint.

Family childcare providers and private Pre-K centers are critical partners in expanding access to high-quality early childhood education. This bill does not acknowledge the importance of



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private providers in meeting Blueprint goals and instead centralizes decision-making under one state agency.

3.Private Provider Voices Could Be Diminished

The AIB has played a critical role in listening to and addressing the concerns of private providers. The Pillar 1 Advisory Committee, which I chair, has worked hard to ensure family childcare and private Pre-K programs are included in Blueprint implementation discussions. If the State Board has sole authority, it is unclear how private provider voices will be represented in decision-making.

Recommendations:

Instead of consolidating all Blueprint authority under the State Board, I urge the General Assembly to consider an alternative approach:

- Ensure the AIB maintains independent oversight of Blueprint implementation while working in partnership with the State Board.
- Guarantee a formal role for private providers—including family childcare and private Pre-K grantees—in all State Board discussions related to Pre-K expansion.
- Preserve AIB’s authority over funding decisions and compliance oversight to avoid delays and ensure all providers—public and private—are treated equitably.

Conclusion

The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future was designed to improve equity in early childhood education, and family childcare providers are a crucial part of this vision. House Bill 1421 threatens to undermine the role of private providers by shifting full control to the State Board of Education, potentially limiting access, funding, and decision-making power for non-public providers.

I urge the committee to reject HB 1421 in its current form and instead support a solution that ensures collaboration between the AIB, the State Board, and private providers.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully,

Ruby Daniels
President, Maryland State Family Child Care Association
Independent Pre-K Expansion Grantee
Chair, Pillar 1 Advisory Committee to the AIB



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