



**Caring For Maryland's Most  
Important Natural Resource™**

## **Maryland State Child Care Association**

2810 Carrollton Road  
Annapolis, Md. 21403  
Phone: (410) 820-9196  
Email: [info@mscca.org](mailto:info@mscca.org)  
[www.mscca.org](http://www.mscca.org)

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*The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) is a non-profit, statewide, professional association incorporated in 1984 to promote the growth and development of child care and learning centers in Maryland. MSCCA has over 5500 members working in the field of child care/early childhood education. We believe children are our most important natural resource and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.*

### **Testimony: HB 1325 Substitute Child Care Provider Pool Pilot Program- Establishment Submitted to: Ways and Means Committee**

**March 3, 2025**

Maryland State Child Care Association enthusiastically supports HB 1325.

Establishing the Substitute Child Care Provider Pool Pilot Program is a necessary lifeline for the essential child care workforce. HB 1325 will help to build a workforce pipeline in a declining industry. The goal of HB1325 is to avoid or eliminate disruptions in early childhood education and care which helps parent work and children thrive.

The pilot will provide opportunities to determine what will work in Maryland, look at other state models, use digital technology, and hopefully, fine tune the pilot to expand for a statewide child care substitute pool in the future.

Child care is a unique business which cannot be automated or delivered curbside. In order for parents to work, go to school or training programs, they must have reliable, consistent, affordable, accessible child care with a qualified workforce.

Staff feel supported when they have options to care for themselves or their family should they get sick, or need time off, therefore a substitute pool will benefit the essential child care workforce with less turnover and less burnout in the field.

National research establishes a clear link between increased access to quality, affordable child care and increased Labor Rate Participation. Additionally, Counting Our Losses publication and research by Maryland Family Network looks at the overwhelming loss to the economy as a result of inadequate child care system. Maryland lost \$2.14 billion due to employee absence and turnover due to child care issues of working Maryland parents of children age five and under.

Child care is a public good and **Childcare should be viewed as infrastructure**. Affordability and accessibility to child care ensures a functioning and thriving economy and labor market in the future. Child care in Maryland is declining and it is time to act with thoughtful intention and innovative solutions, however there is no one-size-fits-all solution. MSCCA believes HB creates an opportunity to build a stronger child care infrastructure. Maryland has lost more than 1,200 child care programs post COVID and without better infrastructure, we will continue to decline. HB 1325 seeks to build a stronger workforce infrastructure.

The Comptroller of Maryland urges in her State of the Economy recent report, As state leaders, we must do all we can to ensure that parents, especially those with young children, have affordable and accessible child care

options and the opportunity to fully participate in the labor force.” <https://marylandtaxes.gov/reports/static-files/research/childcare.pdf>,

The time to act is now. The establishment of a child care substitute pool pilot program to ensure less interruptions in care and education will ensure the workforce is strongly supported, therefore enabling parents to earn while children learn.

MSCCA urges a favorable report.