



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 Karen Earp, Youth Services Manager, Wicomico Public Libraries

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 adds a representative from the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators to the Office of Child Care Advisory Council.

Public libraries serve as essential resources for people of all ages and interests, with a core mission to support early childhood education and development. Libraries are natural partners for early childhood educators and child care providers, and the inclusion of a representative from the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators will significantly strengthen the Council's ability to shape policies that impact children, families, and child care providers throughout Maryland.

A child's development in communication, listening, thinking, and learning starts long before they enter school. Early interactions, problem-solving, and conflict resolution are all influenced by early childhood experiences. As the first public learning environment for many children, public libraries play a pivotal role in fostering positive early childhood experiences. In regions where access to quality preschool programs is limited, public libraries often serve as the sole resource for early literacy and executive functioning development. By incorporating library experts into the Council, policymakers can leverage these valuable contributions to build a more holistic approach to early childhood education.

Thank you for your commitment to Maryland's youngest learners. We respectfully ask for your favorable recommendation of HB 1122 for passage.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen S. Earp

INNOVATE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

PAUL S. SARBANES BRANCH – 122 South Division Street, Salisbury, MD 21801 (410) 749-3612

CENTRE BRANCH – Centre at Salisbury, Salisbury, MD 21801 (410) 546-5397

PITTSVILLE BRANCH – 34372 Old Ocean City Road, Pittsville, MD 21850 (410) 835-2353

www.wicomicolibraries.org