



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

Maryland State Child Care Association

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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 five thousand 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.

Support Testimony: Senate Bill 503– Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Program – Funding Submitted to: Budget and Taxation Committee Date: February 18, 2026

Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland State Child Care Association strongly supports SB 503, which ensures sustained funding for the Growing Family Child Care Opportunities Program. This program is critical to expanding high-quality family child care opportunities across the state and supporting the professionals who provide them. Maryland has seen a steady and alarming decline in child care post COVID leaving less access for working families to child care, especially infant and toddler slots.

Purpose of SB 503:

- Requires the Governor to include \$450,000 in the annual budget for the Program for fiscal years 2023, 2024, 2026, and 2028 through 2030.
- Allows federal funds to be used where authorized to satisfy the appropriation requirement.
- Ensures family child care providers can access start-up assistance for materials, curriculum, renovations, and other costs associated with opening or expanding high-quality family child care homes.

Why This Matters:

Maryland's families rely on accessible, safe, and affordable child care. Family child care providers serve as essential community partners, often operating in neighborhoods and providing options for working families. Funding this Program:

1. **Expands Child Care Access** – Grants help more providers open and sustain family child care homes, increasing the number of available child care slots in every region.
2. **Supports Small Business Owners** – Many family child care providers are small business owners; the fabric of communities, start-up and operational grants reduce financial barriers and strengthen program sustainability.
3. **Strengthens Workforce Stability** – By investing in family child care providers, Maryland helps retain skilled educators and caregivers in the field.
4. **Promotes Equity and Local Partnerships** – The Program requires collaboration with local jurisdictions and child care resource centers, ensuring that funding supports diverse communities and local priorities.

Conclusion:

SB 503 is an investment in Maryland's child care infrastructure, workforce, and families. By securing dedicated funding, this bill helps ensure that high-quality family child care remains accessible, sustainable, and equitable.

We respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 503.