



ARCO IRIS

BILINGUAL CHILDREN'S CENTER

March 9, 2026

Testimony in Support of SB 467
Maryland Child Care Credential Program – Extension of Funding
Submitted to: Budget and Taxation Committee
March 11, 2026
Position: FAVORABLE

Ruth Carolina Reyes

Arco Iris Bilingual Children's Center

14502 Greenview Drive, suite102

301-483-8800 Center

301-538-1978 Cellular

arcoirisbcc@gmail.com

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

Good afternoon. My name is Carolina Reyes, and I am the owner and director of a Arco Iris Bilingual Children's Center serving families a diverse group of families from three different counties. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 467, which extends funding for the Maryland Child Care Credential Program.

As a child care director and small business owner, I see firsthand how important the Maryland Child Care Credential Program is for supporting the professional growth and stability of the early childhood workforce. This program recognizes educators who go beyond the basic licensing requirements by continuing their education, completing professional development, and working to improve the quality of care they provide to young children.

In my program, professional development and continuous learning are essential. Many of my teachers work very hard to complete training and advance within the credential system while also balancing their responsibilities as educators, parents, and community members. The credential program not only supports their professional growth but also recognizes their dedication and commitment to providing high-quality care and education for young children.

However, we must also acknowledge the financial realities facing the child care workforce. Early childhood educators are responsible for shaping the foundation of children's development, yet many are paid very modest wages. Programs like the Maryland Child Care Credential Program provide important incentives and financial recognition for educators who invest their time and effort in professional development and quality improvement.

For child care programs like mine, this program also helps attract and retain qualified staff. Recruiting and keeping experienced educators is one of the biggest challenges facing the child care field today. When educators feel that their professional growth is supported and valued, they are more likely to remain in the field and continue serving children and families.

High-quality early childhood education depends on a strong and stable workforce. Extending funding for the Maryland Child Care Credential Program helps ensure that educators can continue advancing their skills, improving program quality, and strengthening the early childhood system across Maryland.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to give a favorable report on SB 467 and continue supporting the educators who provide the foundation for children's learning and development.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carolina Reyes

Owner & Director, Arco Iris Bilingual Children's Center