



Written Testimony in Support of

Senate Bill 467

Maryland Child Care Credential Program – Extension of Funding Senate Budget and Taxation Committee Date of Hearing: March 11, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ruby Daniels. I am a family childcare provider in Howard County with over 30 years of experience, and I serve as President of the Maryland State Family Child Care Association, representing a little over 4,000 family childcare providers across Maryland including large family child care homes.

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 467 and to ask that you **continue funding the Maryland Child Care Credential Program.**

This program plays an important role in **supporting the early childhood workforce by helping reimburse the cost of professional development training and conference fees.** Many early childhood educators often referred to as family childcare providers, including myself **rely** on this program to continue **improving our skills and strengthening the quality of care we provide to children.**

Family childcare providers are small business owners who often work alone in our homes, serving children for long hours so that parents can go to work. Professional development is essential to maintaining high-quality early learning experiences, but the cost of training and conferences can be difficult to afford on our own.

In FY25, when the Child Care Credential Program **was not funded**, many home-based early childhood educators **struggled** to pay for professional development. Providers often rely on the \$400 training voucher that can be used directly toward conference or training fees, or to reimburse related expenses. Many providers do not even use the full amount, but whatever assistance is available helps make professional development more accessible.

Conferences and trainings provide much more than coursework. They offer access to new resources, updated information, and opportunities for peer-to-



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peer networking and mentoring. Many family childcare providers work in isolation, so these gatherings provide valuable **support and connection that help strengthen our practice and sustain our profession.**

In FY26, the program was restarted, and we are grateful for that support. However, **rebuilding the system up and running takes time.** Consistent funding moving forward is important so providers can continue planning their professional growth and meeting the state's expectations for **higher quality early childhood programs.**

Maryland has made clear that improving the **quality of early childhood education is a priority.** Maintaining the Child Care Credential Program is one of the most practical ways to support that goal. When educators have access to professional learning opportunities, a better educated workforce can provide quality early childhood learning experiences for Maryland's children.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a **favorable report on Senate Bill 467** and continued funding for the Maryland Child Care Credential Program.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for your continued support of Maryland's early childhood educators.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruby Daniels

President, Maryland State Family Child Care Association
Family Child Care Provider, Howard County, Maryland
rubygd33@gmail.com