



Submitted to the Senate Budget and Tax Committee

Position: Support

Testimony regarding Senate Bill 467: Child Care Credential Program - Continuation

Hearing Date: March 11, 2026

March 9, 2026

Dear Chairman Guzzone and other Members of the Committee,

My name is Eileen Reyna, and I am the Director at Bannockburn Nursery School in Bethesda, MD. I am writing to request your support for SB 467, which would restore funding to the Maryland Child Care Credential Program. Its suspension in June 2024 affected more than 20,000 early childhood educators statewide, including the dedicated teachers in my own program, who relied on it for professional development support and for the state's recognition of their expertise.

At Bannockburn, I saw every day how meaningful this program was for my staff. Many of our teachers are parents themselves, juggling family responsibilities while taking evening classes, enrolling in degree programs, and completing the rigorous work required to advance through credential levels. They did this because they take pride in their profession and want to grow for the sake of the children they serve. When the program was abruptly defunded, the impact was immediate and deeply felt. Teachers who had worked so hard lost not only the financial bonuses they depended on, but also the sense of validation that the state saw and valued their efforts. Morale dropped, and several staff members questioned whether pursuing further education and participating in professional growth opportunities was still worth it when the promised support had disappeared.

For us, the Credential Program was more than a set of requirements. It was a clear, dignified career ladder that helped educators see a future for themselves in this field. Restoring it would send a powerful message that Maryland respects early childhood educators and understands that a stable, qualified workforce is essential to the well-being of children and families.

I respectfully urge you to support SB 467 and help rebuild a pathway that honors the commitment, professionalism, and aspirations of the educators who care for Maryland's youngest learners.

Sincerely,

Eileen Reyna
Director

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