



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Senate Bill 664 – Child Care Scholarship Program - Priority for Child Care Providers

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 4, 2026

SUPPORT

Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and members of the Committee.

My name is James Torrence, Executive Director of the Maryland Alliance of YMCAs, which represents six independent YMCA associations serving children and families across Maryland. Collectively, our Ys **serve 421,346 Marylanders** from early childhood through older adulthood.

Maryland Ys and Y-affiliated programs operate across **12 jurisdictions**, providing safe, stable, and affordable care that supports working families and children’s development throughout the state. This footprint reflects sustained investment in quality programs and the Y’s role as a trusted provider, with **more than 130 Maryland EXCELS-licensed childcare and Head Start programs**. In addition, Ys **partner with 200 local schools and leads 28 community schools**, supporting student success through wraparound services, enrichment, mentorship and family engagement. **More than 52,000 children** are served annually through Y childcare, afterschool, and summer programs.

To illustrate the scale and impact:

- The YMCA of Central Maryland employs 361 associates (staff persons) in early childhood education alone, supporting infants, toddlers and preschoolers across multiple counties.
- Ys in Frederick County, Hagerstown, Cumberland, Metropolitan Washington and the Chesapeake region similarly operate licensed centers, school-age programs and summer enrichment initiatives that allow parents to participate in the workforce while ensuring children are in safe, developmentally supportive environments.
- Many of our sites are in Title I schools and communities with limited access to high-quality childcare options.

For working parents, access to reliable childcare is not a luxury, it is the foundation that allows them to show up for work, pursue education and contribute to Maryland’s economy. For children, these programs provide safe spaces, consistent relationships with caring adults and evidence-based early learning experiences that support school readiness and long-term success.

SB 664 supports the stability and sustainability of providers that families rely on every day. Policies that strengthen the childcare ecosystem strengthen workforce participation, economic mobility and educational outcomes across the State.

On behalf of the Maryland Alliance of YMCAs and the hundreds of thousands of Marylanders we serve, we respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 664.

Thank you for your consideration.

Point of Contact

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