



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

Maryland State Child Care Association

2810 Carrollton Road
Annapolis, Md. 21403
Phone: (410) 820-9196
Email: info@mscca.org
www.mscca.org

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 5500 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.

Testimony: HB 748: Publicly Funded Prekindergarten-Early Childhood Career Ladder for Private Providers-New Pathways

Submitted to: Education, Energy and Environment Committee

March 25, 2026

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee:

MSCCA is in strong support of HB 748 -"Publicly Funded Prekindergarten – Early Childhood Educator Career Ladder for Private Providers – Repeal of Deadlines New Pathways", which makes permanent the current and successful career ladder.

This bill addresses a critical need in Maryland's early childhood education system by repealing deadlines for educators to meet experiential and educational qualifications. Instead, it introduces flexible pathways that allow educators to achieve these qualifications within reasonable periods after being hired. This approach recognizes the realities faced by private providers and educators, ensuring that talented individuals are not excluded due to arbitrary timelines.

Key Benefits:

- **Elevating the Profession:** The career ladder is designed to transform early childhood education teaching into a high-status profession while retaining high-quality teachers who gain additional responsibility, authority, status, and compensation as they advance.
- **Flexibility and Opportunity:** By allowing educators to meet qualifications within set periods after hiring, the bill supports workforce development, competency-based equivalencies, and encourages more individuals to enter and remain in the profession. This flexibility is especially important for private providers who often face staffing challenges.
- **Compensation and Professional Growth:** The bill ensures that early childhood educators are adequately compensated for their work and provides opportunities for professional development and advancement. As educators move up the career ladder, their compensation increases, reflecting their growing expertise and contributions.
- **Multiple Pathways:** The bill recognizes diverse backgrounds and experiences, allowing educators to qualify through education, experience, or a combination of both. For example, teaching assistants can qualify by earning a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or holding an associate degree, or

15 years of experience, while lead teachers can qualify through degrees with alternative, competency-based extensive experience, and additional requirements for professional assessment to ensure quality.

Why Support This Bill?

Maryland's commitment to high-quality early childhood education depends on a strong, diverse, and well-supported workforce. This bill makes permanent the successful career ladder, removes unnecessary barriers, promotes equity, and empowers educators to grow within their roles. It is a practical, forward-thinking solution that will help ensure every child in Maryland has access to excellent prekindergarten education.

MSCCA urges the committee to support HB 748 and continue to build an equitable career ladder with competency-based alternative pathways paving the way for a bright future for Maryland's children and educators in a true mixed delivery system.