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Legislative District 14
Montgomery County

Ways and Means Committee

Chair

Child Care Subcommittee

Early Childhood and
Special Education Subcommittee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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**Testimony in Support of House Bill 748: Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Early
Childhood Educator Career Ladder for Private Providers - Repeal of Deadlines**
March 25th, 2026

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and esteemed members of the Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment. I come before you today to offer testimony in favor of **House Bill 748: Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Early Childhood Educator Career Ladder for Private Providers - Repeal of Deadlines**. This bill updates and clarifies the timelines for when early childhood educators in private prekindergarten programs must meet career ladder qualification requirements established under [2024's House Bill 1441](#). HB748 makes permanent the successful career ladder framework for private providers delivering publicly funded prekindergarten and updates the implementation timelines in a thoughtful and practical way.

Under this bill as amended, early childhood teaching assistants must meet required qualifications within three months of hire, and prekindergarten lead teachers must complete requirements within six months of qualifying for that role. These timelines are reasonable and achievable, while maintaining the high standards for quality and educational attainment.

Importantly, HB748 does not lower or eliminate qualifications. Educators are still required to earn the appropriate credentials and degrees. This bill simply ensures that those requirements are tied to career progression rather than fixed calendar dates, creating a more sustainable implementation framework for private providers delivering publicly funded prekindergarten.

Maryland's early education workforce is essential to families and to children's long-term academic success. Private providers operate with different staffing structures than traditional

public school systems, and flexibility in timing helps them recruit and retain passionate educators who are committed to growing into their roles.

A more flexible timeline also supports recruitment and retention. Providers can hire passionate, committed educators who are actively working toward their credentials, rather than turning away promising candidates who may need additional time to complete formal degree requirements. This is especially important for experienced educators and individuals from diverse backgrounds who may face barriers to accelerated credentialing but bring invaluable cultural competence and lived experience to the classroom.

Most importantly, children benefit from a stable, qualified, and supported early childhood workforce. By reducing turnover and supporting classroom continuity, HB 748 strengthens outcomes for young learners while preserving quality standards. I respectfully ask for a favorable report on House Bill 748.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernice Mireku-North". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light gray shadow effect behind the text.

The Honorable Bernice Mireku-North, Esq.
Delegate. Maryland Legislative District 14
Maryland House of Delegates