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March 9, 2026

Testimony in Support of SB 672

Prince George's County – Expanding Access to Early Childhood Education and Child Care

Position: FAVORABLE

Submitted to: Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Deborah A. Williams, and I am the Director of Jaycees Early Learning Center in Fort Washington, Md. I have been a childcare provider for over 25 years. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 672, which requires the development of an implementation and financing plan to expand access to high-quality early childhood education and childcare for children from birth through age three.

Early Childhood Education is a very important part or should I say the beginning of a child's education. Many parents cannot enroll their child or children in Early childhood programs because of the cost however they do realize the need for early education. Many of my families are struggling to pay tuition, rent and other expenses. However, access to high-quality child care remains a major challenge for families. The current freeze on the Maryland Child Care Scholarship Program has made the situation even more difficult. Many families who qualify for assistance cannot access it right now, and providers like us struggle to support families who want to enroll but cannot afford the true cost of care. Without financial support, families are left with very limited options. Providers are also facing significant challenges. While we want to continue serving our communities and expanding access, the cost of operating a child care program is extremely high.

Despite these challenges, we remain committed to our mission of supporting children and families. We want to grow, serve more children, and continue offering high-quality programs. But we cannot do it alone. That is why planning efforts like the one proposed in SB672 are so important. By studying the true costs, workforce needs, provider capacity, and funding options, Maryland can create a thoughtful plan that expands access while supporting the educators and programs that make early childhood education possible. Birth to three must not be forgotten. These years are critical, and investing in them benefits not only children and families but also our entire community and future workforce.

I respectfully urge the committee to support SB672 and take an important step toward expanding access to high-quality early childhood education for the youngest children in Prince George's County.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Deborah A. Williams

Deborah A. Williams

Director