



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

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Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee SB 664: Child Care Scholarship Program – Priority for Child Care Providers Letter of Information

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) supports the Child Care Scholarship Program because of the positive impact on children with disabilities and their families. The Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP) provides financial assistance with child care costs to eligible families in Maryland. The eligible family receives a voucher to use to purchase child care directly from the provider of their choice. Services are provided to eligible families based on an established categories and priorities. Within in each category, eligible families experiencing homelessness and eligible families of children with disabilities are given first priority.

Programs must provide children with disabilities and their families an equal opportunity to participate in the child care program and services by providing reasonable modifications, accommodations, and provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services needed for effective communication.ⁱ Some of these additional accommodations may be costly. In recognition of that, **Maryland law allows for increased CCSP reimbursement rates to a child care provider for the additional costs of providing one-time or ongoing accommodations to a child with a disability – up to 15% above the traditional reimbursement rates or more if approved by MSDE.**ⁱⁱ

Since the early 1990s, Maryland families, children, and child care providers have dealt with several long periods of CCSP enrollment freezes and waiting list. The most recent enrollment freeze and waitlist began in May 2025. This bill requires MSDE to establish a framework to prioritize the children of child care providers. The Council agrees it is important to support the child care workforce, and understands if they do not have care for their own children, they cannot provide care to others.

This is equally true for the direct support workforce that supports Marylanders with developmental disabilities. In fact, in 2024, the Council convened the Direct Support Professional (DSP) Workforce Shortage Think Tank (Think Tank). Working with a representative group of people with developmental disabilities, family members, community providers, advocates, and state agencies, the Think Tank developed recommendations for the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to address workforce capacity issues in the Maryland developmental disabilities service system. **A set of those recommendations revolved around support DSP, and discussions about how to make sure they had child care for their children so they could support others.** There are many groups of people that care and support others, and access to child care is critical for them too.

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ⁱ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. § 12101 (2009).

ⁱⁱ COMAR 13A.14.06.11(E)(5).