



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

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Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

HB 849: Child Care Scholarship Program – Freeze in Enrollment – Exceptions

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. 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. These priorities are in federal law.ⁱ

Programs must provide children with disabilities and their families an equal opportunity to participate in the child care program and services by providing reasonable accommodations.ⁱⁱ 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.**ⁱⁱⁱ

WHAT does this bill do?

- Specifies groups of children and families exempt from a waitlist established by the Department for the CCSP in accordance with federal law.
- Specifies an order of priority for children and families to get off the waitlist that is different than priority groups for the CCSP in federal law.

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, causing a hardship for many Maryland families, including those of children with disabilities.

In addition, the cost of raising a child with disabilities is already higher than raising a child without disabilities. Prioritizing families, other than those of children with disabilities, and those who care for Marylanders with developmental disabilities, potentially adds an additional expense that not possible for many families. 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 45 CFR § 98.46 Priority for child care services. (a) Lead Agencies shall give priority for services provided under [§ 98.50\(a\)](#) to: (1) Children of families with very low family income; (2) Children with special needs... and (3) Children experiencing homelessness.

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

ⁱⁱⁱ COMAR 13A.14.06.11(E)(5).