



**Maryland State
Family Child Care
Association**
www.msfccca.org

Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 849 Child Care Scholarship Program – Freeze in Enrollment – Exceptions

Submitted to the **House Ways and Means Committee**
Date of Hearing: **March 4, 2026**

Position: Favorable

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Ruby Daniels**, and I am the President of the Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA), representing nearly 4,000 family childcare providers across Maryland. I am also a licensed family childcare provider and a Pre-K Expansion grantee in Howard County with over 30 years of experience serving children and families.

I am writing in strong support of **House Bill 849**.

As both a provider and a statewide leader, I receive frequent calls from families who are desperately seeking childcare. Many of them are working parents who want to remain employed, pursue education, or stabilize their families but simply cannot afford the high cost of care without assistance. When the Child Care Scholarship Program is frozen, these families are left with few, if any, options.

A freeze in enrollment does not just affect numbers on a spreadsheet. It affects real families working parents who may have to reduce their work hours, turn down employment opportunities, or leave the workforce entirely. It affects children who lose access to safe, stable, high-quality early learning environments during their most critical developmental years.

House Bill 849 provides thoughtful and targeted protections. By ensuring that families receiving Temporary Cash Assistance, TANF, SSI, recently unemployed parents, furloughed government workers, siblings of enrolled children, and childcare employees are not excluded during a freeze, this bill prioritizes stability for those who are most vulnerable.

Continuity of care is essential. When one sibling is enrolled but another cannot access assistance due to a freeze, families are placed in an impossible situation. Likewise, childcare employees the very workforce that sustains this system should not be prevented from accessing assistance that allows them to continue working in the field.



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Family childcare programs like mine are small businesses embedded in our communities. When families cannot access scholarships, programs lose enrollment, revenue becomes unstable, and capacity declines. At a time when Maryland continues to address workforce shortages and economic recovery, maintaining access to childcare assistance is critical infrastructure.

House Bill 849 recognizes that while fiscal realities may necessitate administrative decisions, we must safeguard the families and workers who rely on this program to remain economically stable.

On behalf of MSFCCA and the thousands of providers and families we serve, I respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 849.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to Maryland's children and working families.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruby Daniels

President, Maryland State Family Child Care Association
Family Child Care Provider & Pre-K Expansion Grantee
Howard County, Maryland