



Informational Testimony on HB 1245
“Baltimore First Responders Child Care Support and Accessibility Program - Establishment”
Submitted to the House Ways and Means Committee
March 11, 2026

Maryland Family Network (MFN) appreciates the opportunity to submit informational testimony on HB 1245, which seeks to improve access to child care for Baltimore’s first responders.

Maryland Family Network (MFN) has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and other vital supports for children and their families. We have been active in state and federal debates on child care policy and are strongly committed to ensuring that children and their caregivers have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

Access to child care is a critical support for Maryland’s working families. Many rely on the Child Care Scholarship Program to help defray the cost. Investing in the Child Care Scholarship Program, rather than establishing separate role-specific child care access solutions, may save on administrative costs and simplify access for families.

There are many careers for whom access to quality child care is essential. First responders with unpredictable schedules, non-traditional work hours, and urgent care needs may face additional challenges when searching for care. [LOCATE: Child Care](#) is Maryland Family Network’s free, confidential referral service. It is the only state-sponsored, continuously updated search system that includes MSDE licensing information. The tool-- administered by MFN under a grant with the Maryland State Department of Education, assists families in locating and selecting child care best suited to their needs, preferences, and ability to pay.

Through LOCATE, MFN educates parents about the benefits of licensed and regulated care settings where safeguards are in place to better ensure child safety. Training in first aid, CPR, safe-sleep, as well as caregivers who have undergone comprehensive background checks are key reasons why many prefer to choose licensed and regulated child care settings.

MFN appreciates the opportunity to submit informational testimony on HB 1245, and we are committed to working with the Administration and General Assembly to ensure all families have access to high-quality child care.

Submitted by: Beth Morrow, Director of Public Policy