**March 2, 2022**

**Testimony Concerning Support for:**

**HB 933 Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations (Maryland Child Care Working Families Act)**

**HB 993 Child Care Capital Support Revolving Loan Fund – Established**

**HB 995 Early Childhood Development – Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations**

**HB 1100 – Child Care Providers and Employees – Bonuses**

**Submitted to the House Committee on Ways and Means**

**Your first and last name**

**The name of your program**

**Address of your program**

**Phone number to reach you**

**Email address to reach you**

**We urge your support for legislation to help ensure a thriving child care system in Maryland.**

Child care providers across the nation continue to struggle as they recover during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Child care providers are in crisis, and so are families, and Prince George’s County is no exception. I am no exception. In the last two years, we have experienced (fill in a few sentences about your experience).

Insert some things about you/your program, for instance:

* That you are licensed
* If you are in EXCELS or not in EXCELS
* If you are or are able to enroll families who pay with scholarship/subsidy or not able to enroll families who pay with scholarship/subsidy
* Your licensed capacity and how many children are enrolled now
* If you have staff, how many you would have ordinarily and how many you have now

In Prince George’s County, area child care providers like me are experiencing deep challenges with

funding/finances, staffing and enrollment which are all totally intertwined. The stabilization funds offered in 2021 were an important step. There is more to be done.

We need help rebuilding our businesses and keeping our quality, relationship-based practices strong, so we can be there for working parents and for young children. The quality of child care, and the experience of the birth-to-five years, are crucial to school readiness and supporting working families.

Insert your own ideas about what a difference it would make to have…

* Access to hiring bonuses for new staff (that’s HB 1100)
* Access to a revolving loan fund to make changes to your program’s physical spaces, with 5 years to repay (that’s HB 993)
* Families with access to presumptive eligibility for child care scholarship(that’s HB 995)
* Payment from MSDE 10 days after you invoice them (that’s HB 995)
* Families relieved from the burden of compliance with child support enforcement (that’s HB 995)
* Families relieved from co pays when they experience challenges, with payment from MSDE instead (that’s HB 995)
* Stronger family eligibility policies and practices so that more families have choices and access to the child care programs that meet their needs (that’s HB 933)

We must continue to take steps to stabilize the child care sector and the well-being of people who work in child care, and we must also rebuild child care better than before.

Thank you for your leadership for our community. Together we can help child care programs to stay open successfully and offer more choices for families, when we make sure that all the pieces and parts of policy ideas come together.