**Here is a sample email you can send to your State Delegates and Senators the week of March 20:**

Dear (Delegate or Senator) (name),

I am urging support for investments in child care, in families, and in our early childhood educators in family child care homes and child care centers. The following bills and issues are important to me:

**HB495/SB350:** I urge support for HB 495/SB350 to put into law our recent gains for child care and specifically the investments in the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP). Specifically it would put into law the recent gains including expanded family eligibility, co pay relief for most families, and payment rates to programs for this important work of being available to families.

**We can not go backwards on these subsidy policies. Still, there is more needed to ensure we can go forward for families. We urge your support for legislation and strong investment in child care in the state budget:**

**HB868/SB873**: I urge support for HB868/SB873. An investment in child care providers like me is an investment in children and families. Through this bill, I could receive as much as $2,500 per month to be used for cleaning and food supplies, early childhood educator wages, and the ongoing expenses of running my program and being available to the families counting on me so that they can go to work. (Insert 1-2 sentences or two about how an additional $2500 per month in stabilization grant funding would make a difference to your ability to be there for working parents and their children.)

**SB 893/HB 1219:** Children experience healthy child development that is crucial for success in school and in life, in family child care, centers, and school-based early childhood programs. To ensure mixed delivery and meaningful teacher preparation, we must value the strengths and competencies of the existing workforce. We must also address the workforce shortage – we need more people to be able to do this important work. We must look at the path to certification, or alternative ways to earn that certification. This is an issue of ensuring equity for educators, an opportunity to invest in learning that is happening where children currently are, and a chance to bring in more early childhood educators to the work. Please reject the House amendments and pass SB 893 with the preK parts intact, as they are written.

**SB 881:** Thanks to your leadership one year ago, legislation to create hiring bonuses was approved and became law. This was an important step toward solving early childhood educator compensation. We hope you share our confusion and concern that these dollars have not moved to the child care provider community after all this time. We urge your support for SB 881, which is a continuation of the bill you approved last year. That bill had an end date, and the agency needs more time. Unfortunately, the child care workforce does not have the luxury of time. We are struggling with critical workforce shortages. These bonuses and support are important for child care centers and family child care right now to incentivize, recruit, retain and train new people. (Insert an explanation of people you know – your staff, for instance – who are counting on this.)

**Parents, young children, and early childhood educators in all settings are counting on this. We need every penny to invest, support and incentivize this essential field.**

Thank you for your leadership for our community. Thank you for hearing our voice in laws that affect our work. The child care crisis is not over in Maryland. There’s more to do and we can do it together.

Sincerely,

(your name)

(your program name)

(your location in Maryland)