

MEMORANDUM

May 1, 2015

TO: County Council

FROM: Amanda Mihill, Legislative Attorney *A. Mihill*

SUBJECT: **Action:** Bill 11-15, Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative

Health and Human Services/Education Committee recommendation (5-0): enact Bill 11-15 with the following amendments:

- require the Executive to designate a Child Care and Early Education Officer in the Department of Health and Human Services; and
- establish the Early Education Coordinating Council.

Bill 11-15, Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative, sponsored by Lead Sponsors Councilmembers Navarro and Riemer and Co-Sponsors Council Vice President Floreen and Councilmember Elrich was introduced on March 3. A public hearing was held on March 17 and a joint Health and Human Services and Education Committee worksession was held on April 27.

Background

As introduced, Bill 11-15 would create a Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative in the Department of Health and Human Services. The Bill would also specify the duties to implement the Initiative. A memorandum from Councilmember Navarro explaining the rationale for this legislation is on ©15-16.

At the Joint Committee meeting on April 27, the Committees reviewed Bill 11-15 along with Bill 13-15, Office of Child Care – Established, which was sponsored by Councilmember Riemer. Bill 13-15 would create an Office of Child Care as a principal office in County government and specify the duties of that Office. A memorandum from Councilmember Riemer explaining the rationale for Bill 13-15 is on ©22-23.

The Joint Committee's discussions focused on separate similar amendments recommended by both Councilmembers Navarro and Riemer. (Councilmember Navarro's amendment would amend Bill 11-15 while Councilmember Riemer's amendment would amend Bill 13-15.) After reviewing the amendments, Committee members agreed to recommend enactment of one bill (Bill 11-15). Councilmember Riemer,

though not a member of the Joint Committee, participated in the discussion and concurred with this action. The Committee worksession fully incorporated discussion of Bill 13-15, but because the recommendation was to enact Bill 11-15, the remainder of this packet will primarily discuss Bill 11-15. The Committee packet, which includes a full discussion of both Bill 11-15 and 13-15 can be found at the following link: http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2015/150427/20150427_HH_SED2-3.pdf.

Public Hearing

At the public hearing on Bill 11-15, JoAnn Barnes, on behalf of the Executive, testified in general support of the bill (©24). The Council also heard from many residents (providers and consumers of child care) in support of the bill.

At the public hearing on Bill 13-15, Uma Ahluwalia, on behalf of the Executive, testified in opposition of the bill. However, Ms. Ahluwalia stated that the Executive could support the bill with amendments that would add an Early Childhood Policy Officer to the Department of Health and Human Services and reconfiguring the Early Childhood Advisory Council as the Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC) (©25-26).¹ The Council heard from residents (providers and consumers of child care) both in support of the bill and expressing concerns.²

Issues/Committee Recommendations

1. Office of Child Care, Early Care, and Education or Child Care and Early Education Officer

As noted above, as introduced, Bill 13-15 would establish an Office of Child Care, Early Care, and Education and assign duties to that Office. Rather than establish a separate Office, the **Joint Committee recommended (5-0)** amending Bill 11-15 to require the Executive to designate a Child Care and Early Education Officer in the Department of Health and Human Services (©3, lines 20-22). The intent of this position would be a high-level employee that would coordinate various aspects of County functions. Programming components would stay within the Children, Youth, and Families Division in HHS. The **Joint Committee further recommended (5-0)** that this position be a merit position.³

Under the **unanimous Joint Committee recommendation**, the Child Care and Early Education Officer would be required to:

- promote coordination and collaboration among County agencies and departments to expand child care opportunities throughout the County;

¹ After the public hearing on Bill 13-15, Executive staff transmitted a document with more concrete options (©33-34). That memorandum is the general basis for the Joint Committee recommendation.

² Generally, testimony and written correspondence was included in the staff packet for the Joint Committee, but is not reproduced here. However, see ©24-32 for select correspondence.

³ The amendment proposed by Councilmember Riemer called for this position to be non-merit. Ms. Ahluwalia originally indicated her preference for this position to be a merit position, but Council staff later learned that the Executive did not object to this position being non-merit.

- monitor and support the coordination between the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Community Use of Public Facilities to administer the selection of providers in public space, including in Montgomery County Public School facilities, to the extent authorized by State law (**Joint Committee recommendation 4-1**, Council President Leventhal opposed);⁴
- monitor and support the implementation of the Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative;
- provide staff support for the Early Childhood Coordinating Council;
- monitor and support the implementation of the Early Childhood Initiative; and
- serve as a liaison between County government and the public on child care-related issues;
- prepare a Strategic Plan for Child Care by 1 year from date of enactment that includes:
 - specific goals and implementation strategies for improving early childhood services and child care provider assistance and counseling;
 - planning for new child care services in public space, including in public school projects;
 - planning for expansion of child care space through public-private partnerships;
 - research on the supply, demand, and affordability of child care throughout the County;
 - a plan for a countywide universal child care and preschool program that provides every child an opportunity to participate in a high-quality preschool, early care, and education program; and
 - a plan to improve readiness for children entering kindergarten through enhanced early care and education services;⁵ and
- prepare an annual report (©3-5, lines 23-69).

2. Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative

As introduced, Bill 11-15 would establish a Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative. Under the Initiative, the Department must:

- at least quarterly, hold an information session on steps necessary to become licensed or achieve accreditation;
- provide technical assistance and business training to family child care providers;
- if requested by a prospective provider, conduct a site-visit to provide feedback and assistance to obtain state licensing;
- provide services in Spanish and other languages as requested;
- conduct an annual assessment of child care needs in the County; and
- prepare an annual report.

The Joint Committee recommended (5-0) establishing this Initiative, but recommended several amendments, including:

⁴ Council staff notes that in order for another department to provide scheduling services in certain MCPS facilities, the Board of Education, which has delegated that authority to CUPF and the ICB, would have to adopt a resolution delegating that authority to that other department. The language as recommended by the Joint Committee will provide flexibility in assigning this function to either HHS or CUPF should the Board of Education delegate this authority to HHS.

⁵ Under Councilmember Riemer's amendment, the Strategic Plan would be developed in consultation with the Commission on Child Care. The **Joint Committee recommended (3-0-2**, Councilmembers Berliner and Elrich abstaining) that this consultation not be required.

- delete the requirement that HHS conduct an annual assessment of child care needs in the County (this function would be done by the Early Childhood Coordinating Council);
- delete the requirement of an annual report (the Child Care and Early Education Officer would be required to submit an annual report that includes updates on this Initiative);
- clarify that the site-visit option is for potential family child care providers that have already submitted an application to the state and would like technical assistance and general program support; and
- make other non-substantive amendments (©5-6, lines 79-99).

3. Early Childhood Coordinating Council

As noted above, as an alternative to establishing an Office of Child Care, Executive staff suggested that in addition to having a Child Care and Early Education Officer, the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) could be established in law and renamed to the Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC).

The ECAC was formed in April 2013 due to a requirement of a State Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge grant. As described in its first annual report, “the role of the ECAC is to monitor, advocate, and make policy recommendations for developing a comprehensive, coordinated early care and educational system that supports school readiness, provides support to state and local initiatives, and builds on the existing efforts to improve the system of early care and education in Montgomery County.”

The Joint Committee (5-0) recommended establishing the ECCC (©7-12). The language recommended by the Joint Committee is closely aligned with the composition and function of the ECAC as contained in the ECAC’s bylaws. Under the Joint Committee’s recommendation, the ECCC would:

- conduct a periodic County-wide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry, including an assessment of the availability of child care, pre-kindergarten, and other supportive services for low-income children and their families in the County;
- identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among child development, child care and early childhood education programs, services, and advocacy groups including collaboration and coordination among State and local agencies and organizations responsible for administering or providing oversight for such efforts;
- develop recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children and their families in existing programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations;
- develop recommendations regarding the implementation and use of the State-established unified data collection system for public early childhood education and development programs and services throughout the County;
- develop recommendations regarding professional development, career advancement plans, compensation scales and incentives for early childhood educators in the County; and
- assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education toward supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in Early Head Start, Head Start, Pre-kindergarten, or child care programs;
- recommend uniform regulations for the availability of quality child care in public spaces;

- develop ways to leverage public and private partnerships between private businesses, Montgomery County Public Schools, and the County;
- develop a hub consortium that connects family child care providers to accredited child care centers and schools to provide training, technical assistance, and mentoring to family child care providers; and
- update and implement an Early Childhood Initiative to integrate public and private early childhood services, including areas such as child care, early literacy, early childhood mental health consultation services, and parent support services.⁶

Council staff notes that there could be overlap between the restructured Coordinating Council and the Commission on Child Care and suggests that after 15-18 months, HHS review the roles of the Coordinating Council and Commission. This review may result in amendments to one (or both) of these bodies.

This packet contains:	<u>Circle #</u>
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⁶ As Council staff understands it, this Initiative was a joint initiative of the Executive, Council, MCPS, and the Collaboration Council for Children, Youth, and Families. The goal of the Initiative was to integrate public and private early childhood services in the County and help children entering school be ready to learn. The Initiative focused on areas including increasing quality child care, promoting early literacy, providing early childhood mental health consultation services, enhancing parent support services, and implementing a public engagement and public awareness campaign. An “Action Agenda” from this Initiative is attached at ©xx.

Bill No. 11-15
Concerning: Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative
Revised: 4/28/2015 Draft No. 4
Introduced: March 3, 2015
Expires: September 3, 2016
Enacted: _____
Executive: _____
Effective: _____
Sunset Date: None
Ch. _____, Laws of Mont. Co. _____

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lead Sponsors: Councilmembers Navarro and Riemer
Co-Sponsors: Council Vice President Floreen and Councilmember Elrich

AN ACT to:

- (1) require the Executive to designate an employee in the Department of Health and Human Services as a Child Care and Early Education Officer and specify the duties of the Child Care and Early Education Officer;
- (2) create a Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative in the Department of Health and Human Services;
- [[~~(2)~~]] (3) specify the duties to implement the Initiative; [[and]]
- [[~~(3)~~]] (4) establish an Early Childhood Coordinating Council and specify the duties of the Coordinating Council; and
- (5) generally amend County law regarding child care, human rights, and administration.

By amending

Montgomery County Code
Chapter 2, Administration
Section 2-42A

By renaming and adding

Chapter 10A, Child Care
Article 1, Child Care
Sections 10A-1 and 10A-2

Article 2, Early Childhood Coordinating Council
Section 10A-3

By renumbering

Chapter 10A, Child Care
Sections 10A-1, 10A-2, 10A-3, 10A-4, 10A-5, and 10A-6

Chapter 27, Human Rights and Civil Liberties
Sections 27-62 and 27-62A

By amending and adding
Chapter 44, Schools and Camps
Sections 44-3, 44-4, and 44-4A

Boldface	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:

Sec. 1. Section 2-42A is amended as follows:

2-42A. Functions, powers, and duties.

* * *

(d) Duties of the Department.

* * *

(3) The Department provides staff support to:

* * *

(M) the Advisory Board for the Montgomery Cares Program;
[[and]]

(N) the Early Childhood Coordinating Council; and

(O) any program created to achieve health equity among
County residents.

**Sec. ~~[[1]]~~ 2. Chapter 10A is renamed and Article 1 of Chapter 10A
~~[[Section]]~~ Sections 10A-1 and 10A-2 is added as follows:**

Chapter 10A. [Child Day Care Facilities Loan Program] Child Care.

Article 1. Child Care [[Expansion and Quality Enhancement]]:

10A-1. Child Care and Early Education Officer.

(a) Definitions. In this Section, Officer means the Child Care and Early
Education Officer.

(b) The County Executive must designate an employee in the Department
of Health and Human Services to serve as an Child Care and Early
Education Officer. Among other duties, the Officer must:

(1) promote coordination and collaboration among county agencies
and departments to expand child care opportunities throughout
the County;

(2) monitor and support the coordination between the Department of
Health and Human Services and the Office of Community Use

- 28 of Public Facilities to administer the selection of providers in
 29 public space, including in Montgomery County Public School
 30 facilities, to the extent authorized by State law;
- 31 (3) monitor and support the implementation of the Child Care
 32 Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative described in
 33 Section 10A-2;
- 34 (4) provide staff support for the Early Childhood Coordinating
 35 Council established in Section 10A-3;
- 36 (5) monitor and support the implementation of the Early Childhood
 37 Initiative as developed by the Coordinating Council;
- 38 (6) serve as a liaison between County government and the public on
 39 child care-related issues; and
- 40 (7) prepare a Strategic Plan for Child Care by [1 year from date of
 41 enactment] that includes:
- 42 (A) specific goals and implementation strategies for improving
 43 early childhood services and child care provider assistance
 44 and counseling;
- 45 (B) planning for new child care services in public space,
 46 including in public school projects;
- 47 (C) planning for expansion of child care space through public-
 48 private partnerships;
- 49 (D) research on the supply, demand, and affordability of child
 50 care throughout the County;
- 51 (E) a plan for a countywide universal child care and preschool
 52 program that provides every child an opportunity to
 53 participate in a high-quality preschool, early care, and
 54 education program; and

55 (F) a plan to improve readiness for children entering
 56 kindergarten through enhanced early care and education
 57 services.

58 (c) Annual report. By February 1 each year, the Officer must submit
 59 to the County Council and County Executive an annual report on:

60 (1) its activities, accomplishments, plans, and objectives;

61 (2) the implementation of the Child Care Expansion and
 62 Quality Enhancement Initiative, including the number of
 63 family child care providers serviced and types of services
 64 provided;

65 (3) steps taken to implement the Strategic Plan for Child Care,
 66 Early Care, and Education the preceding year; and

67 (4) the activities, accomplishments, plans, and objectives of
 68 the Early Childhood Coordinating Council, including
 69 implementation of the Early Childhood Initiative.

70 **10A-2. Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative.**

71 (a) Definitions. In this Article, the following words have the meanings
 72 indicated:

73 Department means the Department of Health and Human Services.

74 Director means the Director of the Department or the Director's
 75 designee.

76 Family child care provider has the same meaning as in Section 5-550 of
 77 the Family Law Article of the Maryland Code or any successor
 78 provision.

79 (b) Initiative. The Department must:

80 (1) at least quarterly, hold an information session:

- 81 (A) for prospective family child care providers, on the steps
 82 necessary to become registered or licensed by the State;
 83 and
 84 (B) for licensed family child care providers, on the steps
 85 necessary to achieve State, regional, or national
 86 accreditation;
- 87 (2) provide technical assistance and coordinate business training to
 88 family child care providers;
- 89 (3) [[if requested, conduct a site-visit for potential family child care
 90 providers to provide feedback and assistance to obtain state
 91 licensing]] if a potential family child care provider is pursuing
 92 registration or licensing and has submitted an application to the
 93 State Office of Child Care, provide technical assistance and
 94 general program support to the provider; and
- 95 (4) provide services in Spanish, and other languages as requested, in
 96 a culturally competent manner]];
- 97 (5) conduct an annual assessment of child care needs in the County;
 98 and
- 99 (6) prepare an annual report, as required in subsection (c)]].
- 100 (c) Regulations. The Executive may adopt regulations under Method (2) to
 101 administer the Initiative.
- 102 [[d) Annual report. By February 1 each year, the Department must submit to
 103 the County Council an annual report on:
- 104 (1) its activities, accomplishments, plans, and objectives;
 105 (2) the results of the annual child care needs assessment; and
 106 (3) the number of family child care providers serviced and types of
 107 services provided.]]

Sec. 3. Article 2 (Section 10A-3) of Chapter 10A is added as follows:

Article 2. Early Childhood Coordinating Council.

10A-3. Early Childhood Coordinating Council.

(a) Definition. In this Section, the following words have the meanings indicated:

Coordinating Council means the Early Childhood Coordinating Council.

Department means the Department of Health and Human Services.

Director means the Director of the Department or the Director's designee.

(b) Established. The Executive must appoint, subject to confirmation by the Council, an Early Childhood Coordinating Council.

(c) Composition and terms of members.

(1) The Coordinating Council has up to 33 members.

(2) The Executive must appoint up to 15 public members. The public members should include:

(A) up to 4 representatives of local providers of early childhood education and development services;

(B) one representative of the Montgomery County Council Parent Teach Associations;

(C) one representative of the Montgomery County Commission on Child Care;

(D) one representative of the Organization of Child Care Directors;

(E) one representative of the Family Child Care Association of Montgomery County;

- 134 (F) one representative of the Maryland Association for the
 135 Education of Young Children;
- 136 (G) one representative of the business community with
 137 demonstrated leadership in early childhood care and
 138 education;
- 139 (H) one representative of the local pediatrician community;
- 140 (I) one representative of the local philanthropic community;
- 141 (J) one representative of the local interfaith community; and
- 142 (K) up to 2 parent representatives.
- 143 (3) The Executive must appoint the following to serve as an ex
 144 officio member:
- 145 (A) the Director of the Department;
- 146 (B) one representative of the Department’s Division of Early
 147 Childhood Services;
- 148 (C) one representative of the Department’s Community Health
 149 Services;
- 150 (D) one representative of the Department’s School Health
 151 Services;
- 152 (E) one representative of the Department’s Infants and
 153 Toddlers Program;
- 154 (F) one representative of the Montgomery County
 155 Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families;
- 156 (G) one representative of the Montgomery County Child Care
 157 Resource and Referral Center;
- 158 (H) one representative of the Montgomery County Community
 159 Action Agency, the administrator of public Head Start
 160 programs in Montgomery County;

- 161 (I) one representative of Montgomery County Department of
 162 Public Libraries; and
- 163 (J) one representative of the Montgomery County Council;
- 164 (4) The Executive must invite the following to serve as an ex officio
 165 member:
- 166 (A) the Montgomery County Public Schools Superintendent or
 167 the Superintendent's designee;
- 168 (B) one representative of the Montgomery County Public
 169 School's Division of Early Childhood Programs and
 170 Services;
- 171 (C) one representative of the School's Division of
 172 Prekindergarten, Special Programs and Related Services
- 173 (D) one representative of the Office of Child Care Region 5,
 174 Maryland State Department of Education;
- 175 (E) up to 2 representatives of public institutions of higher
 176 education in the County;
- 177 (F) one elementary school principal in Montgomery County
 178 Public Schools; and
- 179 (G) one prekindergarten teacher in Montgomery County Public
 180 Schools.
- 181 (5) The term of each member is 4 years. If a member is appointed to
 182 fill a vacancy before a term expires, the successor serves the rest
 183 of the unexpired term.
- 184 (d) *Voting, officers, chairs, meetings, and compensation.*
- 185 (1) Each member of the Coordinating Council is a voting member.
- 186 (2) The Executive must designate the Chair and Vice-Chair.

- 187 (3) The Coordinating Council meets at the call of the Chair. The
188 Coordinating Council must meet as often as necessary to perform
189 its duties, but not less than 9 times each year.
- 190 (4) A member serves without compensation. However, a member
191 may request reimbursement for mileage and dependent care costs
192 at rates established by the County.
- 193 (e) Duties. The Coordinating Council must:
- 194 (1) conduct a periodic county-wide needs assessment concerning the
195 quality and availability of early childhood education and
196 development programs and services for children from birth to
197 school entry, including an assessment of the availability of child
198 care, pre-kindergarten, and other supportive services for low-
199 income children and their families in the County;
- 200 (2) identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and
201 coordination among child development, child care and early
202 childhood education programs, services, and advocacy groups
203 including collaboration and coordination among State and local
204 agencies and organizations responsible for administering or
205 providing oversight for such efforts;
- 206 (3) develop recommendations for increasing the overall participation
207 of children and their families in existing programs, including
208 outreach to underrepresented and special populations;
- 209 (4) develop recommendations regarding the implementation and use
210 of the State-established unified data collection system for public
211 early childhood education and development programs and
212 services throughout the County;

- 213 (5) develop recommendations regarding professional development,
214 career advancement plans, compensation scales and incentives
215 for early childhood educators in the County; and
- 216 (6) assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and
217 private institutions of higher education toward supporting the
218 development of early childhood educators, including the extent to
219 which such institutions have in place articulation agreements,
220 professional development and career advancement plans, and
221 practice or internships for students to spend time in Early Head
222 Start, Head Start, Pre-kindergarten, or child care programs;
- 223 (7) recommend uniform regulations for the availability of quality
224 child care in public spaces;
- 225 (8) develop ways to leverage public and private partnerships between
226 private businesses, Montgomery County Public Schools, and the
227 County;
- 228 (9) develop a hub consortium that connects family child care
229 providers to accredited child care centers and schools to provide
230 training, technical assistance, and mentoring to family child care
231 providers; and
- 232 (10) update and implement an Early Childhood Initiative to integrate
233 public and private early childhood services, including areas such
234 as child care, early literacy, early childhood mental health
235 consultation services, and parent support services.
- 236 (e) Advocacy. The Coordinating Council must not engage in any legislative
237 advocacy at the State or federal levels unless that activity is approved by
238 the Office of Intergovernmental Relations.

239 (f) Staff. The Department of Health and Human Services must provide
240 appropriate staff to the Coordinating Council.

241 Sec. ~~[[3]]~~ 4. Article VIII of Chapter 27 (Sections 27-62 and 27-62A) is
242 renumbered and moved to Chapter 10A, and Articles 3 and 4 of Chapter 10A
243 (Sections 10A-4 and 10A-5) are added as follows:

244 Article VIII. [Commission on Child Care.] Reserved.

245 Article 3. Commission on Child Care.

246 ~~[27-62]~~ ~~[[10A-8]]~~ 10A-4. Commission on child care.

247 * * *

248 Article 4. Child Care Facilities Impact Statements.

249 ~~[27-62A]~~ ~~[[10A-9]]~~ 10A-5. Child Care facilities impact statements.

250 * * *

251 Sec. ~~[[2]]~~ 5. Article ~~[[2]]~~ 5 of Chapter 10A is added and Sections 10A-1,
252 10A-2, 10A-3, 10A-4, 10A-5, and 10A-6 are renumbered as follows:

253 Article 2. Child Day Care Facilities Loan Program.

254 ~~[10A-1]~~ ~~[[10A-2]]~~ 10A-6. Purpose and objectives.

255 * * *

256 ~~[10A-2]~~ ~~[[10A-3]]~~ 10A-7. Eligibility.

257 * * *

258 ~~[10A-3]~~ ~~[[10A-4]]~~ 10A-8. Uses of funds.

259 * * *

260 ~~[10A-4]~~ ~~[[10A-5]]~~ 10A-9. Loan amounts and rates.

261 * * *

262 ~~[10A-5]~~ ~~[[10A-6]]~~ 10A-10. Loan procedures.

263 * * *

264 ~~[10A-6]~~ ~~[[10A-7]]~~ 10A-11. Revolving loan fund.

265 * * *

266 **Sec. 6. Sections 44-3 and 44-4 are amended and Section 44-4A is added as**

267 **follows:**

268 **44-3. Interagency Coordinating Board.**

269 (a) *Establishment and responsibilities.* [[The]] Except as provided in
270 Section 44-4A, the Interagency Coordinating Board for Community Use
271 of Public Facilities must review and coordinate the activities conducted
272 under this Article. The Board must:

273 * * *

274 **44-4. Director of Community Use of Public Facilities.**

275 [[The]] Except as provided in Section 44-4A, the Director must:

276 * * *

277 **44-4A. Child Care in Public Spaces.**

278 The Child Care and Early Education Officer designated in Section 10A-1 must
279 monitor and support the coordination between the Department of Health and Human
280 Services and the Office of Community Use of Public Facilities to administer the
281 selection of providers in public space, including in Montgomery County Public
282 School facilities to the extent authorized by State law.

283 **Sec. 7. Transition of the Early Childhood Coordinating Council.**

284 The County Executive must stagger the terms of the public members initially
285 appointed to the Early Childhood Coordinating Council under Section 10A-3 as
286 added by Section 3 of this Act so that approximately one-fourth of the terms of the
287 public members expire each year.

288

LEGISLATIVE REQUEST REPORT

Bill 11-15

Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative

DESCRIPTION: Bill 11-15 would create a Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative in the Department of Health and Human Services, specify the duties to implement the Initiative, and generally amend County law regarding child care, human rights, and administration.

PROBLEM: The demand for quality child care exceeds supply in the County.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: To assist potential providers in navigating the procedures to become licensed child care providers.

COORDINATION: Health and Human Services

FISCAL IMPACT: To be requested.

ECONOMIC IMPACT: To be requested.

EVALUATION: To be requested.

EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE: To be researched.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION: Amanda Mihill, Legislative Attorney, 240-777-7815

APPLICATION WITHIN MUNICIPALITIES: To be researched.

PENALTIES: N/A



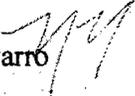
MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

COUNCILMEMBER NANCY NAVARRO
DISTRICT 4

MEMORANDUM

February 20, 2015

TO: Councilmembers

FROM: Councilmember Nancy Navarro 

SUBJECT: Childcare Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative

Montgomery County, like many other communities across the nation, has an unmet need for affordable, high-quality, early learning and childcare availability. For a family of four with an infant and a toddler, the annual cost of childcare is \$25,234--the highest in Maryland.¹ For low-income families, depending on subsidy eligibility, the out-of-pocket expense for childcare programs often exceed 30% of gross income.² As a result, affordability trumps quality, which then leads to children entering kindergarten unprepared.

In order to advance the economic viability of our local economy, we need to develop a long-term strategy for providing quality early childhood education that is affordable and accessible to working parents. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology Workplace Center study found that "every dollar invested in quality early care and education saves taxpayers up to \$13.00 in future costs."³ Making this investment is also the most strategic and cost-effective way to ensure a student's educational and socioeconomic success. All children should enter school ready and able to succeed in order to prepare students for the jobs of the future. Failing to invest in this area will have detrimental effects on Montgomery County's overall economic competitiveness.

¹ <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS->

[Program/Resources/Files/CYF%20Docs/2013MontgomeryCountyDemographics.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/CYF%20Docs/2013MontgomeryCountyDemographics.pdf)

² <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/Resources/Files/Reports/CCCAAnnualReport12-13FINAL.pdf>

³ <http://web.mit.edu/workplacecenter/docs/Full%20Report.pdf>

A pivotal component of this strategy is the integration of Family Childcare Providers in the “Childcare, Early Care and Education” spectrum. Currently, there are over 1,000 licensed Family Childcare Providers serving a population of nearly 7,500 children.⁴ An estimated 70% of the staff in both licensed family childcare and center-based programs speak a language other than English.⁵ This is a tremendous asset because research shows that early exposure to language-rich environments leads to rapid language acquisition, enhanced cognitive ability and has long-term economic advantages.

On March 3rd, I plan to introduce the attached bill establishing the Childcare Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Initiative, as stated in the bill, would require HHS to:

- Hold quarterly informational sessions for prospective family childcare providers and licensed family childcare providers on attaining higher accreditation;
- Provide services in Spanish, and other languages as requested, in a culturally competent manner;
- Provide technical assistance and business training to family childcare providers;
- If requested, conduct site-visits for potential family childcare providers to offer feedback and assistance in obtaining state licensing; and
- Conduct an annual assessment of childcare needs in the County and prepare an annual report.

This legislation is an important step towards expanding the quality and availability of childcare in the County. These new responsibilities for HHS will support and strengthen an existing network of licensed family childcare providers with technical assistance, as well as assisting prospective providers with a better understanding the licensing process, curriculum development, and business skills needed to succeed in this increasingly competitive market.

Thank you in advance for considering cosponsoring and supporting this legislation.

⁴ http://www6.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/agenda/cm/2012/121203/20121203_HHSED1.pdf

⁵ Ibid.



ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

MEMORANDUM

April 1, 2015

TO: George Leventhal, President, County Council

FROM: Jennifer A. Hughes, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Joseph F. Beach, Director, Department of Finance

SUBJECT: FEIS for Bill 11-15, Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative

Please find attached the fiscal and economic impact statements for the above-referenced legislation.

JAH:fz

cc: Bonnie Kirkland, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
Lisa Austin, Offices of the County Executive
Joy Nurmi, Special Assistant to the County Executive
Patrick Lacefield, Director, Public Information Office
Joseph F. Beach, Director, Department of Finance
Uma Ahluwalia, Director, Department of Human and Health Services
Alex Espinosa, Office of Management and Budget
Pofen Salem, Office of Management and Budget
Rachel Silverman, Office of Management and Budget
Felicia Zhang, Office of Management and Budget
Naeem Mia, Office of Management and Budget



**Fiscal Impact Statement
Council Bill 11-15, Child Care
Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative**

1. Legislative Summary.

The proposed legislation requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide information sessions, technical assistance, business training, site visits, and bi-lingual services to facilitate licensure and accreditation for prospective and licensed family child care providers. The legislation would require annual assessments of child care needs in the County and an annual report detailing the initiative's activities, accomplishments, objectives, the number of providers serviced, and the types of services provided.

2. An estimate of changes in County revenues and expenditures regardless of whether the revenues or expenditures are assumed in the recommended or approved budget. Includes source of information, assumptions, and methodologies used.

Additional resources are needed to implement the proposed legislation. First year costs are estimated at \$377,213 for three new merit positions, one contractual position, and operating expenses (see below).

The positions will be applied to Chapter 10A, Article 1, Section 10A-1, Subsection (b)(1) through (b)(6) as follows:

- Program Specialist II: apply to all of above;
- Training Assistant: apply to Subsection (b)(1) – (b)(4);
- Community Health Nurse II: apply to Subsection (b)(1)(A) &(B), (b)(2), (b)(3), and possibly (b)(4) if the staff is bilingual;
- Therapist II: apply to Subsection (b)(1)(B) and (b)(2) specific to early childhood mental health services related to behavioral and mental health.

No change in revenue is anticipated.

FY16 Estimate	FTE	Personnel	Operating	Total
Program Specialist II - Quality Enhancement Coordinator	1.0	82,394		82,394
Community Health Nurse II	0.5	50,178		50,178
Therapist II	0.5	52,041		52,041
Training Assistant - contractual (2,080 hours @ \$33 per hour)			68,640	68,640
Infrastructure costs for the merit positions (i.e., computers, furniture, One-Time-Only (OTO), and ongoing phone expenses)			18,960	18,960
Annual Child Care Needs Assessment			100,000	100,000
Other Operating expenses - office supplies, printing, etc.			5,000	5,000
Total		184,613	192,600	377,213

Note: Infrastructure costs include one-time only (\$17,700) and on-going (\$1,260) costs. PC estimates are based on the salary and fringe rates for FY16.

3. Revenue and expenditure estimates covering at least the next 6 fiscal years

Expenditure	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	Total
PC	184,613	184,613	184,613	184,613	184,613	184,613	\$1,107,678
OE	192,600	174,900	174,900	174,900	174,900	174,900	\$1,067,100
Total	377,213	359,513	359,513	359,513	359,513	359,513	\$2,174,778

Note: Personnel cost does not include future wage increases.

4. An actuarial analysis through the entire amortization period for each bill that would affect retiree pension or group insurance costs.

The proposed legislation does not affect retiree pension or group insurance costs.

5. An estimate of expenditures related to County's information technology (IT) systems, including Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.

Not applicable.

6. Later actions that may affect future revenue and expenditures if the bill authorizes future spending.

The proposed legislation does not authorize future spending.

7. An estimate of the staff time needed to implement the bill.

Staff time will be needed to implement and conduct information sessions, site visits, business training, and research and write reports. Dedicated staff with responsibilities specific to the legislation will be required.

Please see #2 and #3 for the proposed legislation's impact on HHS.

8. An explanation of how the addition of new staff responsibilities would affect other duties.

Not applicable.

9. An estimate of costs when an additional appropriation is needed.

An additional appropriation of \$377,213 is needed for the first year of implementation.

10. A description of any variable that could affect revenue and cost estimates.

Increased future demand for assistance seeking licensure and accreditation through training, mentoring, and site visits could result in waiting lists if additional future resources are not provided.

11. Ranges of revenue or expenditures that are uncertain or difficult to project.

Not applicable.

12. If a bill is likely to have no fiscal impact, why that is the case.

Not applicable.

13. Other fiscal impacts or comments.

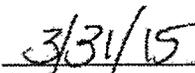
Not applicable.

14. The following contributed to and concurred with this analysis:

JoAnn Barnes, Department of Health and Human Services
Barbara Andrews, Department of Health and Human Services
Patty Stromberg, Department of Health and Human Services
Taman Morris, Department of Health and Human Services
Pofen Salem, Office of Management and Budget



Jennifer A. Hughes, Director
Office of Management and Budget



Date

Economic Impact Statement
Bill 11-15, Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative

Background:

This legislation would create a Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative in the Department of Health and Human Services. The Bill would also specify the duties to implement the Initiative.

1. The sources of information, assumptions, and methodologies used.

It is assumed that this initiative may serve to encourage an increase in the number of licensed family child care providers.

2. A description of any variable that could affect the economic impact estimates.

The number of licensed family child care providers is a variable that could affect economic impact estimates. The number of family members who may be able to enter or re-enter the workforce is unknown as a result of the increase in the availability of licensed family child care providers.

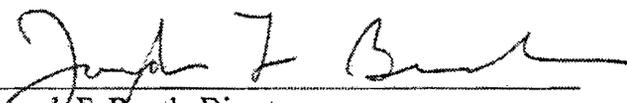
3. The Bill's positive or negative effect, if any on employment, spending, saving, investment, incomes, and property values in the County.

This Bill may have a positive impact on employment and incomes by making additional licensed family child care providers available so that more families may find child care and participate and/or re-enter the workforce. However, the extent to which this Bill would increase employment and incomes is unknown.

4. If a Bill is likely to have no economic impact, why is that the case?

See paragraph #3

5. The following contributed to or concurred with this analysis: David Platt, Mary Casciotti, and Rob Hagedoorn, Finance.



Joseph F. Beach, Director
Department of Finance

3/23/15

Date



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
Rockville, Maryland

TO: Councilmembers
FROM: Councilmember Hans Riemer
DATE: March 12, 2015
RE: Legislation to create an Office of Child Care, Early Care and Education

On March 17, I plan to introduce legislation creating a Montgomery County Office of Child Care, Early Care and Education to make affordable, quality, enriching child care available to all families. I hope you will consider cosponsoring and supporting this legislation.

A rising number of families in Montgomery County are struggling to find affordable, high quality child care. Census data shows that there are more than 64,852 children below the age of five in the county and the Maryland Family Network reports that regulated child care providers offer only 39,084 slots. This leaves a gap of some 26,000 children. Some undoubtedly stay home with family members and many more are cared for by informal, unregistered providers. Some kids may attend child care in other jurisdictions. But ask any parent about their experience with waiting lists and it is clear that demand far exceeds supply for quality, regulated child care. The skyrocketing price of regulated child care supports this theory. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that parents spend 10% or less of their family income on child care. Montgomery County residents, on average, spent 22% of their income on child care in 2014. Child care in Montgomery County costs between 32% and 40% more than the state average. The State predicts that costs will continue to increase through 2018 by between 9% and 14% on average. Infant care is predicted to increase a staggering 40% over the next three years with family care providers.

To address these challenges, I propose legislation establishing a new Office of Child Care, Early Care and Education. This Office would have a Director with the seniority and authority to shape policy and forge meaningful partnerships across agencies and with the private sector. Some functions would be consolidated from the Early Childhood group in the County's Department of Health and Human Services and other offices with child care functions across the government. The Office would be charged with developing, updating, and implementing a Child Care Strategic Plan that addresses child care and early learning in a comprehensive way, establishing new relationships and partnerships with agencies and businesses, overseeing the selection of child care providers in public space, and building a stronger bond with parents in the community.

As President Obama said in his most recent State of the Union, "It's time we stop treating child care as a side issue, or a women's issue, and treat it like the national economic priority that it is for all of us." I agree with those comments and I believe this Office will help us to appropriately define the challenge and meet it.

In Maryland, most government regulation and promotion of child care is handled by the State, though the County supplements the state's efforts in certain areas. HHS is laser focused, as it's website states, on core services that "protect the community's health, protect the health and safety of at-risk children and vulnerable adults and address basic human needs including food, shelter and clothing." This is as it should be. We rely on this Department to provide a robust safety net that protects our most vulnerable residents.

We do not, however, only provide education for the most disadvantaged children. I believe we should have a policy strategy for child care that is similarly focused on the entire population, while resources are prioritized according to need. Like education, adequate availability of child care affects every family in Montgomery County. A county program that ensures that every family in Montgomery County has access to high quality, affordable, enriching child care is crucial for developing our workforce and economy, ensuring equal opportunity for men and women, and reducing the achievement gap. The creation of this Office will not solve these problems by itself, but it will at least provide us with the analytical framework and focused staffing to make informed investments and take a deliberate approach to define our next steps. The mission is broader than social services and for this reason I believe it is necessary to establish this function as a principal office rather than a division inside of HHS.

The goals for the Office include:

- Researching need, availability and cost of care.
- Identifying measures to reduce the rising cost of child care, and ensuring that affordable early child care and learning are available to all County residents.
- Ensuring that there are sufficient providers and spaces to meet rising demand.
- Improving the overall quality of early care and education to adequately prepare children for kindergarten and beyond.
- Fully integrating child care and early learning into our economic and workforce development strategy.
- Regular reporting on progress towards the plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE ISIAH LEGGETT
Bill 11-15, Child Care Expansion and Quality Enhancement Initiative

March 17, 2015

Good afternoon Council Members, I am JoAnn Barnes, Chief of Children Youth and Family Services in Health and Human Services, and it is my pleasure to appear at this hearing on behalf of County Executive Isiah Leggett in support of Bill 11-15. We believe that our Early Childhood Services, as part of DHHS Children, Youth and Family Services, work towards many of the goals of this bill. The bill proposes expansion of the work that we are currently doing to support providers through training, technical assistance and mentoring across the County. Our goal is to serve a very diverse group of Family Child Care Providers. Our staff at the Montgomery County Child Care Resource and Referral Center (MCCCR&RC) is bilingual in several languages, with half bilingual in Spanish. We translate materials, offer training sessions in Spanish and provide one-on-one and small group technical assistance and mentoring in Spanish.

Our vision for strengthening Child Care and Early Childhood Services focuses our work on three pillars related to Child Care: (1) looking closing at the infrastructure and facility issues that impact parents and providers in the provision of services; (2) examining ways to enhance the quality of child care for families at all economic levels; and (3) looking at affordability and program access for low-income families through programs like the Working Parents Assistance Program.

We will provide information regarding proposed costs of the enhancements proposed in this bill as a part of the fiscal impact process. Additionally, we will propose several amendments to the bill related to: (1) the work that we will do with unlicensed providers to move them along the registration/licensing continuum with the State Office of Child Care Licensing; and (2) an effective means of measuring the actual "need" for child care in Montgomery County.

We appreciate Councilmembers Navarro and Floreen's continued support of high quality child care and agree that this bill will help us reach more of the informal or unregulated family child care providers in the County so as to improve the opportunities for all young children and their readiness for school. While we consistently work on many of the aspects of this bill, expanding the work of the Montgomery County Child Care Resource and Referral Center would allow us to reach more providers and expand on the quality initiatives already in place.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Uma S. Ahluwalia
Director

TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE ISIAH LEGGETT
Bill 13-15 Office of Child Care - Established

March 31, 2015

Good evening. My name is Uma Ahluwalia and I am the director of Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. I am here tonight to speak on behalf of the County Executive regarding Bill 13–15, Office of Child Care. This bill proposes the creation of an Office of Child Care, Early Care and Education as a principal office in County government that would provide leadership and policy direction for the implementation of the programs currently in the Early Childhood Division of HHS' Children Youth and Family Services. The bill also proposes certain changes related to the community use of public facilities for child care and before and after school care. I first would like to speak to the County's commitment to strengthen child care, early care and education.

The functions in Article 1 of the proposed bill are largely already within the Department of Health and Human Services and are a part of our mission. Our vision for strengthening Child Care and Early Childhood Services focuses on three pillars related to Child Care:

- (1) **Infrastructure and Facilities:** Looking closely at the infrastructure and facility issues that impact parents and providers in the provision of services that is responsive to all consumers of child care services regardless of their financial capacity. This body of work includes reviewing and creating new criteria to be used for expansion of child care into new schools and public spaces, data modelling to inform the need for child care and collaboration with other agencies to ensure that there is a strong focus on quality programming in the selection process.
- (2) **Quality Initiatives:** Examining ways to enhance the quality of child care for children in families at all economic levels and assisting providers as they strive to meet the new State quality ratings. This area of work involves examining the readiness gaps for low income families and English language learners as well as for children with disabilities; prioritizing outreach for parents and providers and to further expand current quality efforts and support Mrs. Navarro's quality initiative.
- (3) **Access and Affordability:** Looking at affordability and program access for low-income families through programs like the Working Parents Assistance Program. Create a master plan for child care in public space in conjunction with county growth priorities and develop a budget that reflects those priorities.

Office of the Director

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www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hhs

TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE ISIAH LEGGETT

Bill 13-15 Office of Child Care – Established

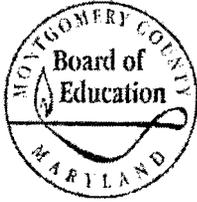
March 31, 2015 | Page 2

In addition, we have worked to create an Early Child Care Advisory Council in the County as required by the State. The leadership of the Council has been extensively trained by MSDE and now are formulating a separate agenda for Montgomery County in collaboration with key stakeholders.

We are sensitive to the public voice of advocates and stakeholders regarding many of our programs at HHS. We recognize that this bill and the voices of the many stakeholders in this room reflect a call for greater attention to be paid to the importance of child care and early learning. Within HHS we believe that integration of Early Childhood Services within our Children, Youth and Family Service Area is a best practices model. There are important dependencies that currently exist between early care and education, linkages to learning, children's mental health, infants and toddlers, child care subsidies and other programs. The establishment of this new office will create the unintended consequence of separating functions that are best performed in an integrated fashion.

County government is unable to support this bill as proposed. However, the County Executive believes that the goals of this bill could be achieved by the addition of an early Childhood Policy Officer that reports at the highest level in HHS and by the effort to reconfigure the Early Childhood Advisory Council as the Early Childhood Coordinating Council that is written into statute and would support the strategic work of Early Childhood Services within the County. The Executive branch could support amendments to this bill that do not create a new and separate office, but instead add a Policy Officer who would work with a Coordinating Council to set the County agenda for Child Care, Early Care and Education.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify before you today.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

April 2, 2015

The Honorable George Leventhal, President
Montgomery County Council
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Leventhal:

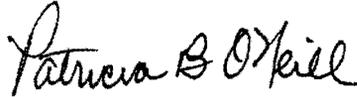
I am writing to share thoughts on pending bills before the County Council to address child care resources and management. Specifically, Councilmember Hans Riemer has offered a bill that would create an office of child care in county government, and Councilmembers Nancy Navarro and Nancy Floreen are offering a bill that would create a child care expansion and quality enhancement initiative within the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Montgomery County Board of Education appreciates the work of Councilmembers on this important issue. Appropriate and comprehensive early childhood education is crucial to closing the achievement gap, and is impacted by the quality of available childcare. The Board's Strategic Planning Framework and legislative priorities are influenced by a deep belief in high-quality early childhood initiatives, and the need to shore up gaps in instructional preparedness before youngsters show up at the school door.

The proposed bills demonstrate that Councilmembers have been thinking hard about this important issue; and, in meetings and conversations, I have been impressed by their commitment and passion for meaningful positive change in how this county approaches the availability and need for quality childcare, especially in the face of a vastly changed population. We would like to be part of the conversation and welcome the opportunity to create a shared vision. Therefore, it is important that all key stakeholders be in the same room to ensure that we are all talking to each other and getting buy-in. Key agencies like the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Community Use of Public Facilities, the county executive's office, as well as the school system, partnering with the County Council, need to come up with a structure and resources both to realize this goal and to meet the needs of our children.

Once more, I want to thank Councilmembers Hans Riemer, Nancy Navarro, and Nancy Floreen for all their work on attempting to level the playing field for all children in terms of the provision of childcare. The Board stands ready to help in any way that is needed to achieve this laudable goal.

Sincerely,



Patricia B. O'Neill
President

Copy to:

Mr. Leggett
Members of the County Council
Members of the Board of Education
Mr. Bowers
Dr. Statham
Dr. Zuckerman
Dr. Navarro
Mr. Ikheloa
Mr. Song
Ms. Ahluwalia
Ms. Gong



COMMISSION ON CHILD CARE

April 16, 2015

The Honorable George Leventhal
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear County Council President Leventhal:

At our meeting last night, the Commission on Child Care reviewed the briefing packet that was published today for this Friday's joint HHS/ED Committee meeting. There are significant amendments proposed to child care bills 11-15 and 13-15 and the briefing packet raises a series of questions for consideration related to the proposed approaches to legislation outlined in each of the bills.

The Commission would like to offer Committee members the following guidance for consideration on key elements that we believe are essential to ensuring consolidated, coordinated and effective administration of high quality child care and early education services in Montgomery County:

- ~~A high-level Child Care and Early Education Officer with the autonomy, authority and visibility necessary to recommend and affect policy change and align systems across departments and agencies.~~
- A strong statement that the responsibility for coordination and administration of all aspects of managing child care providers in public space, including MCPS, should be consolidated into the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under direction of the Child Care Officer; to the extent authorized by State Law. We understand that there would be an additional step required with the Board of Education to delegate some aspects of this responsibility.
- A Strategic Plan that defines the comprehensive actions and funding needed to support child care, early education initiatives and school readiness. This plan would be developed by the Child Care and Early Education Officer with support from the Commission on Child Care and the proposed Early Childhood Coordinating Council (ECCC). The plan would specifically outline opportunities to align and streamline policies and systems that support child care in the County and should also evaluate the feasibility of a "hub consortium model" and other best practices in service delivery.



Department of Health and Human Services

Page 2

- The ECCC be constituted with a permanent position for a Commission on Child Care member as designated by the Commission.

We appreciate the Council's commitment to thoughtful consideration of these very important issues related to the delivery of high quality child care and early education. The issues are complex and will require a commitment of time and resources to affect meaningful change. We look forward to collaborating with HHS and other key stakeholders to provide support and expertise as the Council approaches a final bill.

Sincerely,

The Commission on Child Care

Cc County Executive Isiah Leggett



COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD

April 16, 2015

Montgomery County Council
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue, 5th Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Councilmembers:

As the Council continues its discussion of early care and education in the County, I am writing on behalf of the Community Action Board (CAB) to express our support for strengthening early childhood services through Council legislation. Furthermore, we agree with DHHS Director, Uma Ahluwalia that creating an early childhood policy position within DHHS, rather than a new office, will allow for additional oversight of child care, while maintaining consistency within the existing offices that handle licensing, outreach, vouchers, training, and other important quality initiatives. The Board also supports a strategic plan for child care and early childhood services, to clarify the County's early childhood care and educational goals, and help focus attention on programs and practices that are working, along with those needing improvement. The formalizing of the Early Childhood Advisory Council is also an important step to making sure that the holistic needs of young children are reflected in policy and planning.

As the voice of the County's low-income community and the governing body for Head Start, our Board has been a consistent advocate for critical early childhood issues, and includes Head Start representatives among its membership. Our Board believes that assuring access to Head Start and high-quality early childhood services are key strategies in ending poverty; especially for families with barriers such as generational poverty, limited English proficiency, and lack of knowledge of essential community resources. Historically, CAB's advocacy has encompassed:

- Expanding hours for children served by Head Start and PreK, and providing the same comprehensive services for PreK children as for Head Start, including nutrition, health screenings, family support and parent education

Department of Health and Human Services • Office of Community Affairs • Community Action Agency

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montgomerycountymd.gov/311  301-251-4850 TTY

- Increasing funding for Working Parents Assistance, to serve more children
- Increasing access to early childhood programs for three year olds
- Supporting the County's Early Head Start and Judy Center programs (including the program which meets at Community Action's TESS Center), and increasing funding for the Infants and Toddlers Program

Both the Self-Sufficiency Standard and Faces of Poverty reports document that for low-income families, child care costs consume more than a third of income. At our poverty forum, low-income residents were vocal about the immense burden of paying for child care. Residents have asked for the Board's help to convey their message-- access to affordable, high-quality child care is an essential element in improving the economic well-being of their families, and in helping to ensure that all children will be ready to learn.

Thank you for focusing the Council's attention on improving child care services. We look forward to working with you to address the pressing issues impacting low-income children.

Sincerely,



Matthew J. Green, Jr.

Chairman

Community Action Board

HHS Options to Bill 13-15

The creation of a new office of Child Care diminishes efforts to integrate related human services related to child care and early education resources by eliminating the following intersections:

- Child Care Subsidies with the Office of Eligibility and Support Services achieving efficiencies as well as a one-stop approach.
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation with Behavioral Health and Crises Services providing support to Providers working with children with social and emotional behavioral problems.
- Early Childhood Nurse Consultation with Public Health Services' Community Health and School Nurses providing training resources for providers and referral opportunities for families.
- Resources and Referral Training Services connecting Providers with Resources from the Infant and Toddlers Program.
- Parent Cafes, ChildLink connect parents and providers with a variety of CYF Services including Linkages to Learning, Kennedy Cluster/Watkins Mill Cluster (recently confirmed by the PYDI budget), Eligibility and Support Services.
- Infants and Toddlers Program and Disability Services.

Most of the responsibilities in Bill 13-15 are included in the work that Early Childhood Services performs in HHS and should not be separated from the programs mentioned above.

As options to the bill, HHS recommends consideration of the following:

Elevate the Early Childhood Advisory Council to an Early Childhood Coordinating Council. By adding local responsibilities to the ECAC, the Council can authorize the ECAC to serve as the entity to lead research; promote collaboration between HHS, MCPS and other county agencies and stakeholders; seek innovative programs and policy. This group would create both a strategic plan for the program and an annual report. Cost to implement is nominal.

And/Or

Create a Child Care and Early Education Officer with staff to provide leadership to the research, review and implementation of Child Care and Early Education programming; promote coordination and collaboration among county agencies, departments and stakeholders to expand opportunities

throughout the County; and lead the work of the Coordinating Council. The cost to implement this is approximately \$385,000 for three positions, including the Policy Officer, and administrative support staff person and a data and planning specialist. This option could begin by just hiring the policy officer until a strategic plan is drafted.

Montgomery County Early Care Education Congress Action Agenda



help me grow

Montgomery County has a strong tradition of supporting high quality early care and education to promote school readiness. Building on this history and on the County's *2000 Early Childhood Comprehensive Plan*, Montgomery County was identified as a site for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Leadership in Action Program (LAP) in 2007. Montgomery County LAP (MCLAP) participants engaged more than 20 community partners from the public and private sector of the early care and education community to focus on a single outcome "all Montgomery County children will enter school fully ready to learn."

As a result, MCLAP developed a *Draft Action Agenda* and launched the *Early Care and Education Congress* to engage as many stakeholders as possible to refine the Action Agenda and mobilize the entire early childhood community to focus on all children entering school fully ready to learn. Ultimately the Congress will serve as an organizing body -- aligning the work of the early care and education community.

The first *Montgomery County Early Care and Education Congress (MCECEC)* was held on April 18, 2008 with more than 100 attendees for the first public announcement on the *Action Agenda's* preliminary goals and action steps. In addition, 239 early childhood stakeholders completed the online survey noting their comments, impressions and general feedback to the *draft*. As a result of this community input, new action steps, ideas and perspectives were incorporated into the draft. With the understanding that this is a living document of the early childhood community, we now present the *Early Care and Education Congress's Action Agenda* to guide our work from this point forward. We welcome further input on the agenda and involvement in the work groups that will continue to refine and shape the agenda.

The *Montgomery County Early Care and Education Congress (MCECEC)* will continue to engage new partners and leaders to implement the *Action Agenda* and meet periodically to coordinate efforts in the early childhood community. It is our hope that the MCECEC Action Agenda will serve as a broad framework to allow the early childhood community and its partners to identify, individually and collectively, where they may contribute most effectively to the result of ensuring all young children are ready for school.

You hold an integral role in this process and work. As a champion of Montgomery County's youngest residents and a supporter of a family-focused early childhood service delivery system, it is our hope that you will sign on and make every effort to do your part. Help us to continue on this path toward success and our commitment to the children and families of Montgomery County.

You can sign on to the Montgomery County Early Care and Education Congress and demonstrate your support and commitment to implementing the Action Agenda by completing and returning the "Statement of Support" form on the last page.



The Action Plan

Goal 1: *Everyone in Montgomery County will understand the need to support school readiness and their role in preparing children for school.*

Rationale: When people understand the value of early care and education to learning and life, they will support activities and programs that promote school readiness. The actions below are designed to increase public awareness, enhance parents' role as their child's first and best teacher, and engage public support for these initiatives.

Recommended Action Steps

1. Engage and Empower Parents and Caregivers

- ☑ Expand “help me grow” public engagement efforts to reach new audiences by ensuring information is shared in multiple languages, supporting presentation of information and materials, and participating in activities/events.
- ☑ Under the “help me grow” umbrella, create and distribute materials to educate parents and the general public using a variety of media outlets and in languages other than English.
- ☑ Make information about parenting, child development and community resources easily available to all parents and caregivers.
- ☑ Create opportunities for all parents and caregivers to engage in school readiness activities, wherever children are.
- ☑ Include parents in decision making and development of outreach and activity planning.
- ☑ Make special and priority efforts to engage new partners and leaders to participate in the Montgomery County Early Care & Education Congress, especially parents and members of minority communities.
- ☑ Conduct targeted outreach to actively engage minority populations, and to communicate the value of high quality early care and education settings.

2. Educate and Obtain the Commitment of Policy Makers and Business Leaders

- ☑ Educate elected officials, policy makers and business leaders about the value of early care and education and its link to school readiness using the “help me grow” public engagement materials.
- ☑ Ensure that specific advocacy and education efforts aimed at elected officials will include garnering their support for increased training opportunities for providers.
- ☑ Pursue cost-benefit analyses of prevention and early intervention strategies.
- ☑ Ensure that materials for elected officials and business leaders clearly articulate the positive returns on investing early in high quality programs for all children, particularly those who are most vulnerable.
- ☑ Develop a Legislative Agenda that is developed and adopted at the local level and promoted at the state level based on the recommendations of the Montgomery County Early Care & Education Congress.
- ☑ Identify leaders who will talk with elected officials about the importance of investing in early care and education. Make special effort to identify parents and “corporate champions” willing to talk with elected officials about early care and education.
- ☑ Advocate for the expansion of effective early childhood and family support services to targeted populations by participating in writing grants, lobbying /advocating, etc.
- ☑ Keep policy makers informed on the status of Universal Preschool and Community-based Pre-Kindergarten.

Goal 2: *All children, birth through age 5, will have access to high quality and culturally competent early care and education programs and health services that meet the needs of families, especially low-income families, families with children with disabilities and English language learners.*

Rationale: The data show that children who participate in high quality early care and education programs and services are more ready for kindergarten than those children who do not participate in high quality programs.

Recommended Action Steps

1. Improve Early Childhood Program Effectiveness

- Promote evidenced based practices.
- Identify and fund programs that achieve the best outcomes for young children.
- Increase the availability of onsite early childhood mental health consultations for all family child care, center child care, pre-kindergarten classrooms and other group settings.

2. Promote Access to High Quality Programs by Eliminating Barriers

- Solicit parent input and possible solutions/strategies.
- Analyze barriers and develop strategies to address them.
- Promote improvements to the child care subsidy system that will support families' ability to access high quality early care and education programs and services such as reducing parent co-pays.
- Encourage outreach to low-income families, families with children with disabilities and English language learners to increase their involvement in high quality early care and education programs and services.
- Enhance family involvement and support in early childhood programs.
- Ensure that schools are ready for ALL children.
- Promote the provision of service and program information, both verbal and written, in languages beyond English and Spanish.
- Advocate for equitable salaries and benefits for all members of the early care and education workforce based on education and experience.
- Promote communication and coordination among parents, child care, early intervention and school staff to foster smooth transitions and collaboration as children grow.

3. Promote Access to Health Care for Pregnant Women and Young Children

- ☑ Promote comprehensive health and wellness screenings and services as a part of all quality early childhood programs.
- ☑ Work in concert with existing public and private health services and providers.
- ☑ Encourage each pediatrician to have a staff member who is involved with the early care and education community-wide efforts.
- ☑ Promote good health and nutrition among families with young children as part of overall well-being.



Goal 3: *All professionals, who work with children birth to age five and their families, will be appropriately educated in promoting and understanding a comprehensive approach to the development of the whole child, including physical, social-emotional and cognitive well-being as a basis for school readiness.*

Rationale: Early experiences, environment and healthy development determine whether a child's brain will provide a strong or weak foundation for all future learning. Programs and policies that ensure a well trained and highly skilled early care and education workforce are imperative. The need for ongoing, relevant training and professional development for early care and education staff, health practitioners and families is constant, and the demand for high-quality professional development and training far outweighs the supply.

Recommended Action Steps

Strengthen the Professional Development System for Those Working with Young Children

- ☑ Implement a quality professional development system through continuing coordination and expanding education, credentialing, technical assistance, and training in collaboration with training institutions, academic institutions, and other organizations.
- ☑ Create greater partnership opportunities among training organizations to expand professional development and to align practices, especially in school readiness.
- ☑ Promote program accreditation and best practices in school readiness, including the role of play in the curriculum and the importance of parent involvement.
- ☑ Ensure training for cultural competency so staff may work effectively with diverse populations, including ethnic groups, low-income families and English language learners.
- ☑ Expand pool of well-trained early childhood professionals, including opportunities for those who are English language learners or not currently working in regulated settings.
- ☑ Provide incentives such as free and low-cost trainings for formal and informal caregivers to participate in opportunities for skill building.
- ☑ Expand opportunities for health professionals to learn about developmental "red flags" that warrant referral to early intervention services.
- ☑ Use technology to increase access to information about early care and education.
- ☑ Expand the capacity of early care and education professionals to meet the needs of families with children with special needs.

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Bill 11-15/Bill 13-15	FTE	FY16	FY17
Personnel Cost			
Policy Director - MII	1.0	87,335	174,670
OSC (Grade 16)	1.0	33,935	67,870
Data Specialist - Planning Specialist III (Grade 23)	1.0	30,060	120,240
PC total	3.0	151,330	362,780
Operating Expenditure			
Infrastructure cost PINs		19,765	1,740
General Office supplies		2,500	5,000
Printing & Mail		1,000	2,000
Travel		2,500	5,000
Memberships and Dues		1,000	2,000
Professional Purchase of Services - contract for Strategic Plan		75,000	75,000
OE total		101,765	90,740
Total Cost	3.0	253,095	453,520
<p>Personnel Cost is the average of DHHS positions in the same job class. The FY16 PC is lapsed @ 0.5 for Policy Director; 0.5 for OSC; and 0.25 for Data Specialist.</p> <p>FY16 Infrastructure cost includes - furniture, desk phone, smart phone, computers - OTO (\$19,000) and ongoing (\$765) costs. FY17 ongoing costs are \$1,740.</p> <p>Strategic Plan will be completed in FY17 and updated every three years.</p>			