



November 3, 2020

Dear County Council Members,

I'm writing about [Executive Order 122-20](#), part of which would restrict capacity at County child care centers to not exceed 50 percent capacity. As the director of the Takoma Park Child Development Center in Montgomery County, I am alarmed and confused by this order.

First, "50 percent capacity" isn't clear. There are a variety of ways one could determine 50 percent capacity (by total Center licensed capacity, by individual classroom capacity, etc.). If approved, this should be clarified.

Child care centers in Montgomery County are already restricted to no more than 15 people per classroom (while the rest of the state currently allows full capacity). In my center that means that we are running each classroom with 12-13 children and 2-3 teachers per classroom. We are operating at a financial loss each month because our staffing needs have not changed, but the number of children we can serve and the amount of tuition we are collecting has. However, if we were required to operate each classroom at 50% capacity, and implement this order on November 5, 2020, at 5 p.m, as written, that means that children who are receiving care on Wednesday wouldn't be allowed to return to care on Thursday. How am I supposed to choose which children and families are more deserving of care? This would also mean that the Center would lose more income each month and would risk having to shut down due to lack of funds. Child care is essential infrastructure for families, and without it, we all suffer.

A recent study from Yale University has shown that [Child care is not associated with the spread of COVID-19](#). Additionally, how do we expect parents to work and to encourage economic growth -- or even maintain a local economy -- during this time if we do not provide child care for families?

I strongly oppose this part of the Executive Order and request you not approve the Order.

Thank you,

Lara Marks Finder

Interim Director of Operations

Takoma Park Child Development Center

310 Tulip Avenue | Takoma Park, MD 20912 | www.tpcdc.org

Office (8 AM-5:30 PM): 301-270-6824 | Mobile: 202-906-0202

lara.tpcdc@gmail.com