



100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1915, Gaithersburg, MD 20899

November 3, 2020

Dear Council Members,

I am the Executive Director of the NIST Child Care Center. I was taken by surprise when I heard about this hearing. It is not a secret that childcare centers are struggling right now. We have been fortunate thus far that we have not had to lay off any of our staff. I understand the reasoning behind the reduced number of bodies in a classroom and fully support it in the capacity we are currently at (15 bodies per classroom). Even though it is causing our center to run with a deficit each month we have remained open for our families.

Our Center provides childcare to scientists and engineers who maintain the safe operation of critical infrastructure at NIST, amongst those including the Nuclear Reactor at NIST's Center for Neutron Research. Among our families there are also essential workers, including health care providers on the frontline against COVID in Montgomery County health care settings. Curtailing our services would substantively impact our ability to provide childcare, creating significant challenges for these Montgomery County employees to serve in their essential roles within the community.

If this executive order is passed, we will have to shut down our virtual learning classroom and ask families to leave the program. I can't imagine having to tell a family that has been with us for 5 to 6 years that they can no longer attend. In addition to reducing our enrollment we will be forced to lay off up to 50% of our staff.

I do not support the executive order the way it is presented.

Sincerely,

Tracey Rex M.ED
Executive Director
NIST Child Care Center