

Testimony of Kimberly Johnson Family Child Care Provider – Montgomery County, MD

Good evening. My name is Kimberly Johnson, and I've been a family childcare provider in Montgomery County for 20 years. During that time, I've cared for and educated hundreds of children, each one with their own story, their own needs, and their own potential. My passion for this work has only grown stronger with time.

Over the years, I've made it a priority to invest in my own growth and give back to the childcare community. I've pursued ongoing education, mentored fellow providers, and worked hard to raise the bar for quality care. In 2024, I was honored to receive an education award from Montgomery County, something that meant a great deal to me and reaffirmed my commitment to this field. I've also been involved in professional development programs like Aspire for the past five years and have participated in Excels and Credentialing for many more. These programs, along with the support we've received from the Children's Opportunity Alliance (COA), have made a real difference—not just for me, but for many providers across the county. That's why I'm deeply concerned about the proposed changes to COA's legislation.

I understand the need to address duplication and make systems more efficient but removing the ability to fund grants enter with childcare providers would be a huge step backwards. These supports are what help us innovate, stay connected, and continue growing—not only as professionals, but as a community working to serve children and families. When COA was first created three years ago, we felt included. We felt like our voices mattered. These new changes feel like the opposite. They send a message that providers like me are no longer part of the conversation—that we're being pushed to the sidelines. I want to keep being part of the solution. I want providers to continue working hand-in-hand with COA to build a stronger early childhood system in Montgomery County. Please don't take that connection away.

Thank you for your time,

Kimberly Johnson