



**Testimony Concerning HB 524**  
**“State Board of Education - Membership - Early Childhood Development Professional”**  
**Submitted to the House Ways and Means Committee**  
**February 12, 2025**

**Position: Support**

Maryland Family Network (MFN) supports HB 524, which would alter the membership of the State Board of Education to include an early childhood development professional.

Maryland Family Network (MFN) has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and early childhood education, as well as other supports for children and families in Maryland. MFN commends the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for their longstanding support of young children, their families, and others who provide them care.

The single greatest factor determining a child’s success in school and later in life is the quality of his or her experiences from birth to age 5. The State has made substantial investments in early childhood education, providing critical supports to children and families before the children arrive at kindergarten. Early childhood education is a core pillar of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future and the State continues to grow investments in the Child Care Scholarship Program. The inclusion of an early childhood development professional on the State Board could support informed policy making in these areas.

MFN appreciates the State Board of Education’s creation of the new Workgroup on Early Childhood Education and Care. This advisory body, along with the Office of Child Care Advisory Council, will provide the perspective of those directly impacted by Board policy and elevate recommendations.

Regardless of Board composition, we urge members to prioritize the importance of the early years and sustain critical investments that support our youngest learners.

MFN requests a favorable report on HB 524.

**Submitted by** Beth Morrow, Director of Public Policy

