



HB 597

Position: Support

Ways and Means Committee

Feb. 3, 2021

Esteemed members of the Ways and Means Committee:

The goal of HB 597 is to ensure the quality care & early education of children by qualified and high-caliber teachers in light of the critical workforce shortage experienced in the childcare industry, even more critical due to the COVID 19 pandemic. As a member of the senior leadership team at Celebree who has been responsible for the recruitment and hiring of teaching and leadership positions for our schools for the last 13 years, this amendment will be a tremendous help in widening the pool of degreed candidates needed to provide quality early education to children ages 2-12 in childcare setting. This legislation which still embraces COMAR qualifications, including degrees in more majors, provided that the candidates meet the probationary standards of enrollment in an approved 90-hour certification class, will:

- Increase the ability for childcare providers to deliver **quality, early education & care to more children**, ensuring more children are prepared for school
- Expedite the process for qualifying candidates or receiving a variance for candidates to guarantee the ongoing quality education & care in every classroom for every child
- Help to alleviate the current workforce shortage by widening the candidate pool to include possible career-changers, as the City Residency Teacher Program increased teachers for Baltimore City Schools
- Diminish the adverse effects that critical workforce shortage in the field is having on the families, the children and on the businesses, both large and small
- Engage more candidates with degrees in the education field who previously had not considered this industry or discovered late that teaching was their passion
- Diversify the teacher pool to provide a more diverse learning experience for all children

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This amendment will positively impact children and the industry in so many ways! It will allow organizations like Celebree School to truly find and retain the best candidates. Having consistent teacher requirements that allow for educational diversity of the candidate pool will only benefit the children.

The Celebree School fully supports HB 597 and respectfully requests that you vote in favor of Bill HB 597. Thank you.

Emily Samuels, District Director

The Celebree School – 24 schools in 7 Maryland Counties

Approx. 1,200 employees, 3,300 children