



**Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)**  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** March 24, 2023

**TO:** The Honorable Members of the Delaware General Assembly

**FROM:** Ann C. Fisher, Chairperson  
GACEC

**RE:** **Senate Bill No. 58 Elimination of Purchase of Care Program Co-Pays**

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed Senate Bill No. 58, which would remove Purchase of Care (POC) Program co-pay requirements for Delaware families earning less than 200% of the federal poverty line (FPL). Council **supports** the proposed legislation.

The POC Program provides support for early childhood and after school education for children of eligible families. POC Program families can use the subsidy and choose from a wide range of childcare providers. In order to participate in the POC Program, parents and children have to meet eligibility guidelines, and parents may have to pay a co-payment directly to the childcare provider.

During the COVID-19 pandemic and public health emergency, the Division of Social Services (DSS) waived the copayments and families were not required to pay their childcare provider. The DSS took this step in part to help families who were impacted through job loss or other deleterious effects of the pandemic.

The actions of DSS were as stated in the synopsis "successful in stabilizing families and providing early learning program for Delaware's needy families and children." This bill would make the changes permanent and not require copays for families earning less than 200% of the FPL. Also, the bill would help childcare providers that accept POC. The bill would reimburse childcare providers up to 15 days per month for each child of eligible families that is absent from and does not attend the childcare setting.

This bill makes the changes implemented by DSS during the pandemic that were successful in helping eligible families with children permanent. By having childcare for children not of school age or for children after school is finished, parents would be able to work or in other cases receive training so they could join the workforce. Childcare providers who accept POC would receive reimbursement when the child is absent from childcare up to the prescribed limits, thus providing some financial security to the provider as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our support of Senate Bill No. 58. Please feel free to contact me or Pam Weir at the GACEC office should you have any questions.