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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

House Bill 608- Early Childhood Education-Child Care Providers Support Grant Program. (The Child Care Provider Support Act)

Ways and Means Committee - February 5, 2021 SUPPORT

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American Jewish Committee
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American Red Magen David for Israel
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Shomrei Emunah Congregation
Simon E. Sobeloff Jewish Law Society
Suburban Orthodox Congregation
Temple Beth Shalom
Temple Isaiah
Zionist Organization of America
Baltimore District

Background: House Bill 608 (HB608) would establish a \$25 million dollar grant program starting in FY23 for Early Childhood Centers (ECC) and other childcare providers who have financially struggled or closed due to the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Grants could be used for payroll, rent or mortgage and other similar expenses outlined in the bill. Entities would have to show a specified financial loss in order to be eligible. The state would also prioritize grant recipients from high poverty zip-code and zip-codes where a significant number of licensed centers have closed.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) represents that Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and all of its agencies, including the Jewish Community Centers of Greater Baltimore (JCC's). The JCC's have two early childhood centers, one of which has been closed since the beginning of the pandemic. The economic impact has been great for not only our JCC's but for several other ECC's in the Jewish community, including centers attached to our synagogues. To give a snapshot of the impact, the Owings Mills JCC in FY20 (June 19-July 20) had a revenue of \$1.9 million, whereas the projected revenue for FY21 is \$1.4 million (with the help of the Federal PPP) and the Park Heights JCC, which remains closed, had an FY20 revenue of about \$1 million and will have \$0 for FY21. On top of that, the Owings Mills JCC had increased costs including \$25,000 for PPE, additional teacher costs, employer paid medical for furloughed staff and unemployment costs related to the staff that were furloughed and not hired back. Without assistance many childcare centers are not going to be able to make into the end of the pandemic, in fact 16% of childcare centers in our state have already closed. When Covid-19 is eventually under control, and parents and guardians are expected to physically go back to the office, we are going to need childcare centers. This is particularly true for women and single parents who will be forced out of the workforce if there is no readily available childcare. Providing financial support to childcare providers should be an instrumental part of our state's Covid relief package.

For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on HB608.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

BALTIMORE JEWISH COUNCIL
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Member of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Baltimore Jewish Council is an agency of The Associated



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