



Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 919

Child Care Capital Support Revolving Loan Fund - Established

To: Chair Guy Guzzone and Members of the Budget & Taxation Committee

From: Demaune A. Millard, President & CEO, Family League of Baltimore

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Family League of Baltimore (Family League) supports Senate Bill 919 as it would establish the Child Care Capital Support Revolving Loan Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund to provide no-interest loans for capital expenses related to a child care facility to child care providers who participate in the Child Care Scholarship Program; requiring interest earnings of the Fund to be credited to the Fund; requiring the State Department of Education to administer the Fund; and requiring the Department of Commerce to publicize the availability of loans from the Fund.

Establishing a fund to assist child care providers with making facility changes that include acquisition, expansion, renovations and new construction would allow the centers to be in a better position to provide quality childcare. This bill is particularly important because it has a contingency on only distributing funds to providers and facilities that have accepted children that have received a childcare scholarship. In addition to providing funds to these groups, the loans will have no interest which would allow providers less stress for repayment. Baltimore City falls under the priority categories of underserved communities and childcare deserts especially after centers closed due to the pandemic. Inner city children deserve to receive the best early childhood education to help prepare them to enter into the school system and be successful. Child care providers receiving these loans would help a lot of centers expand with updating the spaces that would in turn create a better learning environment for children.

Often times, providers have the desire to make changes to their facility, but cannot due the costs and this loan fund would help alleviate that stress. In order to allow equal access to the funds, making sure that it is publicized properly would allow more people to apply and have a better chance at receiving the funds. It is possible that the centers that receive funds and make renovations will cause for a rise in enrollment which means more children will have access to early childhood education.

As the designated Local Management Board for the City of Baltimore, Family League works collaboratively to support data-informed, community-driven solutions to align resources to dismantle systemic barriers that limit the possibilities for children, families, and communities. Our policy focus is also guided by and in support of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention Youth and Victim Services' Results for Child Well-Being. Through our strategic planning

process, we have prioritized three of these results areas, focusing on the success of Baltimore's children in school; the economic stability of families; and the safety of communities for children, youth, and families. We support SB919 in particular because of its alignment with the result areas that work to ensure "Children Are Successful in School" and "Families are Economically Stable."

For more information contact Keontae Kells, Executive Administrator kkells@familyleague.org