



**Testimony on behalf of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce**

*In Support of  
Senate Bill 480—Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and Child Care Expansion Grant  
Program--Established*

*February 16, 2022  
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and Education, Health and Environmental Affairs  
Committee*

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce (GBCC) was founded in 1926. Since then, the organization has grown to more than 550 businesses located throughout the Greater Bethesda area and beyond. On behalf of these members, we appreciate the opportunity to provide written comments on Senate Bill 480—Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and Child Care Expansion Grant Program—Established.

The Greater Bethesda Chamber has identified the issue of child care access and affordability as an urgent economic imperative that needs to be addressed to help Maryland grow and prosper. We strongly believe there are economic costs to unreliable and unaffordable child care. As Maryland continues to reopen and more people go back to work, child care challenges present a growing threat to the State's economy. The rapid workplace changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact and created significant new challenges in the attraction and retention of employees. Now more than ever, the availability of quality and affordable child care is an important determinate to the success of the local workforce.

We believe the programs established in Senate Bill 480 are a step in the right direction to helping current struggling child care providers while at the same time providing much-needed assistance to new providers. We must support this struggling industry as it is a crucial one for the success of Maryland's current and future workforce.

For these reasons, we strongly support Senate Bill 480.