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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 480- Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and Child Care Expansion Grant Program – Established

Budget and Taxation Committee and Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee– February 16, 2022 SUPPORT

Background: Senate Bill 480, (SB480), would establish the Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and the Child Care Expansion Grant Program in the State Department of Education. The Stabilization Grant would provide financial assistance to childcare centers at risk of closing in the next year due to financial hardships. Grants for eligible centers would range from \$1,000 to \$35,000 dollars. The Expansion Grant would help fund the expansion of current licensed providers or help with the opening of new centers. Grant for eligible centers would range from \$3,000 to \$50,000 dollars.

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 run two early childhood centers, one of which was closed for a large part of 2020 due to 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).

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 had closed by January 2021 and by November 2021 751 centers had 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 focus on a post-Covid world.

With this in mind, the Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report on SB480.

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



