



## Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 480

### Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and Child Care Expansion Grant Program – Established

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

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

**Date:** February 16, 2022

Family League of Baltimore (Family League) supports Senate Bill 480 Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and Child Care Expansion Grant Program – Established as it would establish the Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and the Child Care Expansion Grant Program in the State Department of Education. This bill is necessary for families across Maryland, specifically the city of Baltimore as childcare across the state has experienced major losses due to attendance since the start of the pandemic. The goal of childcare is to provide a safe educational environment for children under school age to learn and be prepared to enter school. Many families were forced to remove their child(ren) from daily early childcare education, resulting in a decline in attendance and enrollment. The two grant funds provided by this bill would enable licensed childcare providers in danger of closing in the next 12 months due to financial hardship to remain open and expand.

Childcare centers in Baltimore would be positively impacted by the passage of SB480 as it would prevent closure of more childcare centers and sustain existing operations. The expansion portion of the grant could increase availability of quality childcare. Many parents rely on accessible childcare, therefore any mechanisms supporting the sustainability of centers in essence would benefit a thriving workforce. In 2021 Baltimore City<sup>1</sup> employed more than 275,000 workers, which is why childcare is important. According to a study done by Maryland Family Network<sup>2</sup>, with the decline in enrollment for children the amount of childcare center open will continue to decrease through 2025. This bill would help alleviate some of the stress that these providers have and provide continuous access to childcare for the parents.

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

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<sup>1</sup> [BaltimoreCity\\_0.pdf \(marylandfamilynetwork.org\)](#) Page 1

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/BaltimoreCity\\_0.pdf](https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/BaltimoreCity_0.pdf). Page 9

communities for children, youth, and families. We support SB480 in particular because of its alignment with the result areas that work to ensure *Children Are Successful in School*.

*For more information contact Keontae Kells, Executive Administrator [kkells@familyleague.org](mailto:kkells@familyleague.org)*