

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

with Amendments

Testimony to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
in amended support of
Senate Bill 480: Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and Child Care Expansion Grant Program -
Established
February 16, 2022

Strong Schools Maryland urges a favorable vote on an amended Senate Bill 480: Child Care Stabilization Grant Program and Child Care Expansion Grant Program - Established.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future envisions a world-class system of public schools for our state's students. The Kirwan Commission's far-ranging research in early childhood education led them to make recommendations that function outside of the traditional K-12 system. Similarly, the General Assembly saw fit to support policies that invest in Judy and Patty centers, recognizing the intergenerational benefit of supporting entire families with young children early on.

The current global coronavirus pandemic and resulting policies have severely damaged the capacity of our state's current child care industry to make the conditions envisioned in the Blueprint true. Families with low wealth, those learning to speak English, and those historically denied opportunities for their children to succeed have been impacted disproportionately negatively, and their needs must be addressed.

We request the following amendment to Senate Bill 480:

- Direct the grant program administrators to prioritize relief for providers and providers serving communities who have been disproportionately impacted by the current child care crisis, particularly on the basis of race, native language, disability, or socio-economic status.

Thank you,

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