



**Senate Bill 920 -- *Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program - Alterations*
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
March 15, 2022
Support**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, supports Senate Bill 920 -- *Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program - Alterations*.

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to establish a process for granting presumptive eligibility for a subsidy under the Child Care Scholarship Program. House Bill 995 further requires MSDE to award a subsidy that ensures an individual will not have to pay a copay for child care if the individual provides proof of participation in certain State or federal programs and employment or enrollment in an education or career training program.

MCCC has identified the issue of child care access and affordability as an economic imperative that needs to be addressed to help Maryland employers and employees succeed. There are significant economic costs to unreliable and unaffordable child care in Maryland.

MCCC contends that increasing affordable and quality child care was critical prior to the pandemic and is now even more important. As Maryland seeks to open up more following the Omicron variant and get more people 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 have created new challenges in attracting and retaining employees. Now more than ever, the availability of quality and affordable child care is an important determinate to the success of the workforce.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports Senate Bill 920 and respectfully requests a favorable report.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of our nearly 500 members, advocates for growth in business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and a proud Montgomery County Green Certified Business.

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