THE GREATER BETHESDA
CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

Testimony on behalf of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce

In Support of
House Bill 933—Child Care Scholarship Program—Alterations (Maryland Child Care Working Families Act)
House Bill 993—Child Care Capital Support Revolving Loan Fund-Established
House Bill 995—Early Childhood Development—Child Care Scholarship Program-Alterations
House Bill 1100—Child Care Providers and Employees--Bonuses

March 4, 2022
House Ways and Means 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 bills you are hearing today, House Bill 933, House Bill 993, House Bill 995 and House Bill 1100, are a step in the right direction to helping current struggling child care providers (both center-based and family) and the children, families and caregivers they support. 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 House Bills 933, 993, 995 and 1100.