



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

**House Bill 0995 - Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations
Ways and Means Committee – March 4, 2022
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC urges passage of HB0995 - Early Childhood Development - Child Care Scholarship Program – Alterations. This bill requires the State Department of Education to grant presumptive eligibility under the Maryland's Child Care Scholarship Program (CSS) to a family who already participates in certain income-qualified programs. The CSS provides financial assistance with child care costs to eligible working families in Maryland. These "presumptive benefit" programs include the Federal Special Supplemental Food Program for Women and Infants (WIC); Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Federal Choice Voucher Program; Maryland Guaranteed Access Grant Program; Federal Supplemental Security Income Benefits Program (SSI); Temporary Cash Assistance Program (TANF); and employment or enrollment in a qualified education or career training program. This bill also requires the establishment of a streamlined application process for "presumptive benefit" applicants including an on-line certification. A qualified individual shall receive benefits pending review. The CSS subsidy shall be sufficient in such that no co-pay will be required. Furthermore, an individual is not required to pursue or receive child support in order to qualify, and the Department shall pay a child care providers within 10 days after the Department receives an invoice.

This legislation would simplify and streamline the child care scholarship application process for families that already qualify for other means-tested programs. This legislation also requires timely CSS payments for childcare providers, many of which are small businesses that operate with tight financial margins, and for which delayed payments can mean an inability to make payrolls.

We ask for your support for HB0995 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report. To maintain our competitive edge as a State, we need to keep women in our workforce.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano
President