



Good afternoon, my name is Louisa Duggan— and I am submitting written testimony on behalf of Vote Mama Foundation in strong support of HB0331.

Childcare obligations are one of the major factors families consider when weighing their decision to run for office. In many states, it costs more to send an infant to childcare than to complete a mortgage payment. This is not an expense working families can take on — especially when campaigning.

**[Vote Mama Foundation is the only organization working to expand and codify the use of Campaign Funds for Childcare in all 50 states.](#) Having young children should never deter any parent from considering a run for office. At Vote Mama Foundation, we believe being a caregiver is a resume builder: we need folks in office representing the needs of everyday families.** By making this one simple change, we can support young families and their need for safe and affordable care.

In 2018, the Federal Election Commission approved federal candidates' option to spend campaign funds on childcare through a unanimous, bipartisan vote. This paved the way for other federal candidates to do so as well.

**[Subsequently, 31 states, both Democratic and Republican, have brought their state statutes in line with federal regulations.](#) States like Arkansas, California, Washington, and West Virginia all allow for candidates to use their campaign dollars on caregiver expenses.**

Currently state and local candidates in Maryland are allowed to use their campaign funds on childcare expenses through an [Ethics Ruling published in 2019](#). By codifying the Ethics Ruling, the Maryland Legislature has the opportunity to send a clear message to all candidates - that the use of campaign money on childcare expenses is explicitly allowed and should be normalized.

This legislation is a bipartisan initiative for moms and dads alike. As with any other campaign finance allowance, this bill creates an option for use and is not a mandate — candidates don't have to use campaign funds on caregiving expenses if they don't want to.

Even better — this common sense solution is at no cost to taxpayers.

I am thrilled to share that in January of 2024, Vote Mama Foundation released [Campaign Funds for Childcare: A Data-Driven Report on a Structural Solution for Caregiving Candidates](#), a groundbreaking report on the impact and usage of Campaign Funds for Childcare (CFCC)!



Our research revealed that since 2018:

- **CFCC spending has increased by 662% for federal candidates and by 2,156% for state and local candidates**
- The majority of federal funds were spent by women
- At the federal level: 46% of funds were spent by candidates of color
- At the state and local level: 70% of funds were spent by candidates of color

Thank you for your time and consideration. I respectfully ask the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to support HB0331 and vote it out of committee.