



## **Testimony on behalf of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce**

*In Support*

*Senate Bill 516—Property Tax-Day Care Centers, Child Care Homes, and Child Care Centers*

*February 12, 2025*

*Senate Budget and Taxation Committee*

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce (GBCC) was founded in 1926. Since then, the organization has grown to more than 600 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 516—Property Tax—Day Care Centers, Child Care Homes, and Child Care Centers.

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce 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 focuses on growing its workforce, child care challenges present a growing threat to the State's economy. The rapid workplace changes brought about by the recent pandemic has had a tremendous impact and created significant challenges in the attraction and retention of employees. Now more than ever, the availability of quality, affordable child care is an important determinant to the success of the local workforce.

We believe Senate Bill 516 provides another tool in the toolbox to help all providers in the State. As the Comptroller's recent report on the issue states, child care prices are high in part because provider costs are high. Every effort to help defray the costs of providing care makes care more affordable for parents and caretakers. 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 Senate Bill 516 and urge a favorable report. Thank you to Senator King for her leadership on this issue.

