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211 Maryland
Baltimore Jewish Council
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Energy Advocates
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Family League of Baltimore
Fuel Fund of Maryland
Job Opportunities Task Force
Laurel Advocacy & Referral Services, Inc.
League of Women Voters of Maryland
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Community Action Partnership
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Food Bank
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Paul's Place
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore
Welfare Advocates

Marylanders Against Poverty

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 452

Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

February 12, 2025

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) supports SB 452, which would establish a Child Care Affordability Commission to study and make recommendations regarding child care affordability in the state.

Maryland families need affordable, accessible, quality child care options. Across Maryland, child care ranks as one of the top household expenses in all jurisdictions, making child care unreachable for many families.¹ In order to enter and remain in the workforce, parents need assurance that their children are being cared for in safe, nurturing environments. Additionally, we know that high-quality, developmentally appropriate child care helps prepare low-income children for school and helps close the achievement gap.

While Maryland has made historic investments in the Child Care Scholarship (CSS) Program, gaps remain in serving all eligible families. Currently, only 14% of eligible households in Maryland are served by the CCS program. As the state grapples with budgetary challenges, a Child Care Affordability Commission could consider best how to build upon Maryland's progress in expanding access to high-quality child care for more families who struggle to find and pay for it. Moreover, this Commission will examine the barriers to increasing the supply of child care, and what additional supports could be offered to increase supply while maintaining quality.

Improving access to quality, affordable child care will increase the economic security of Marylanders struggling in or near poverty. **MAP appreciates your consideration and requests the committee provide a favorable report on SB 452.**

¹ Maryland Family Network. 2024. *Child Care Demographics*.

<https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/early-years-matter/2024-child-care-demographics>

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.