

SB 452 - MAP - Child Care Commission - FAV.pdf

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Position: FAV



Member Agencies:

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.

2025 GBCC SB 452 Child Care Affordability Commissi

Uploaded by: Ashlie Bagwell

Position: FAV



Testimony on behalf of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce

In Support

Senate Bill 452—Child Care Affordability Commission--Establishment

February 12, 2025

Senate Education, Energy and the Environment 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 452—Child Care Affordability Commission--Establishment.

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, lasting 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 452 would provide a long-term roadmap to achieving child care affordability in the State. We appreciate the inclusion of businesses of all sizes on this Commission as the business community is absolutely a stakeholder in this issue. When child care is affordable for all families who need and want it, we believe the economy can thrive.

For these reasons, we strongly support Senate Bill 452 and urge a favorable report. Thank you to Senator King for her leadership on this issue.

SB0452 -- Child Care Affordability Commission - Es

Uploaded by: Brian Levine

Position: FAV



Senate Bill 452 -- *Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment*
Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
February 12, 2025
Support

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, supports Senate Bill 452 -- *Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment*. Senate Bill 452 creates the Child Care Affordability Commission to study and make recommendations regarding child care affordability.

MCCC has identified child care access and affordability as a critical economic issue that must be addressed to support both employers and employees in Maryland. Unreliable and unaffordable child care imposes significant economic costs on the state.

MCCC stresses that the need for affordable, high-quality child care was already crucial before the pandemic and has become even more urgent now. As more workers have returned to the office, child care challenges persist, hindering economic growth. The availability of quality, affordable child care is now more than ever a key factor in attracting and retaining a high-quality workforce in Maryland.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports Senate Bill 452 and respectfully requests a favorable report.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), on behalf of its members, champions the growth of business opportunities, strategic infrastructure investments, and a strong workforce to position Metro Maryland as a premier regional, national, and global business location. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent, non-profit membership organization.

*Brian Levine | Vice President of Government Affairs
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
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Rockville, Maryland 20850
301-738-0015 | www.mcccmd.com*

- MSCCA Testimony - SB 452 final pdf.pdf

Uploaded by: Christina Peusch

Position: FAV

Maryland State Child Care Association

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www.mscca.org

Caring For Maryland's Most Important Natural Resource™

The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) is a non-profit, statewide, professional association incorporated in 1984 to promote the growth and development of child care and learning centers in Maryland. MSCCA has over 5000 members working in the field of child care/early childhood education. We believe children are our most important natural resource and work hard to advocate for children, families and for professionalism within the early childhood community.

Testimony: SB 452 Child Care Affordability Commission- Establishment Submitted to: Education, Energy, and Environment Committee February 12, 2025

MSCCA enthusiastically supports SB 452.

The establishment of the Child Care Affordability Commission is important because child care is an economic and equity imperative. Most families struggle to find or afford high-quality child care that meets their needs.

SB 452 understands the critical role affordable child care plays in the economy of Maryland, the essential impact child care has on businesses, and the importance of child care in the success of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future of mixed delivery, which is unattainable without child care.

We know employers need a dependable workforce, and affordable child care can help support the workforce. Businesses lose profit and productivity when there are insufficient, affordable child care options. The Maryland Chamber of Commerce lists child care as a top priority because child care directly and indirectly impacts businesses.

<https://www.mdchamber.org/2024/12/02/2025-legislative-priorities-and-critical-issues/>

According to the Comptroller of Maryland in her State of the Economy report released December 31, 2024, <https://marylandtaxes.gov/reports/static-files/research/childcare.pdf>, Maryland's Labor Force Participation remains at 3.8% below pre-pandemic levels and Maryland's child care workforce has not recovered and rebounded as many of the other states in the country. Maryland has lost over 1,200 child care businesses or 15.5 % and continues to suffer a decline in number of child care seats losing over 12,000 or 5.5 % in overall capacity in licensed child care slots. When parents cannot access affordable, consistent child care, they miss work, which leads to lower household incomes and job loss.

Investing in affordable child care, which is early education, helps children succeed in school and in life. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, Pillar 1 mixed delivery goals are squarely based on child care participating as partners in mixed delivery, yet based, on the Comptroller's recent State of the Economy, child care continues to decline in our state.

<https://marylandtaxes.gov/reports/static-files/research/childcare.pdf>

SB 452 creates a Commission to include a broad, cross sector of expert stakeholders to study and make recommendations regarding child care affordability, including, identifying the obstacles and barriers to a fiscally sustainable child care/early childhood education system, measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of investments in child care, and will work to address adequate and sustainable resources to build a stronger infrastructure for child care/early learning.

Additionally, SB 452 will examine relevant issues concerning affordability and quality of child care with the guidance of the established Commission. This work could review the child care licensing and regulations, child care scholarship program, policies and quality initiatives, expansion of mixed delivery, and Kindergarten readiness data related to child care.

The Comptroller of Maryland urges in her State of the Economy report that in order to “solve the challenges that confront working parents in maintaining a foothold in the labor force, policymakers and the public need to understand the shifts and changes to Maryland’s child care industry.” SB 452 is a step in the right direction to advise the General Assembly.

The Comptroller concludes, “The U.S. Treasury Department has called the nation’s child care system a “market failure” because parents are required to pay out of pocket for the cost of care in order to work, but the cost of providing high-quality care is more expensive than many parents can afford. Government intervention is necessary to address market failures. As state leaders, we must do all we can to ensure that parents, especially those with young children, have affordable and accessible child care options and the opportunity to fully participate in the labor force.”

<https://marylandtaxes.gov/reports/static-files/research/childcare.pdf>,

SB 452 is also addressing viability of small businesses and equity, as women dominate the child care workforce. Child Care is primarily small businesses often women and minority owners and operators.

Despite the importance of access to high-quality child care to children, families, communities, and our country's economic growth, child care remains a fundamentally broken system. Even with historic investments and improvements in policies around the child care scholarship program, Maryland is planning to freeze the child care scholarship program and decrease the reimbursement rates by 10% for service providers, therefore many parents will not be able to work and will have less access to quality, affordable, licensed, safe, child care in our state. Child care providers will suffer due to less reimbursement in an already tenuous tuition dependent business model.

The time to act is now. The establishment of a Child Care Affordability Commission should be a priority for state policy makers due to the historic investments of the Administration and recommendations of our Comptroller. We owe it to working families, our businesses, and our economy to address affordability for child care.

Maryland State Child Care Association urges a favorable report.

WDC letterhead testimony SB452.pdf

Uploaded by: Cynthia Rubenstein

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

Senate Bill SB452 Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee – February 12, 2025

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 2025 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of SB452. This bill will establish a Child Care Affordability Commission to study and make recommendations regarding childcare affordability in the State.

Despite historic investments in childcare—with \$605 billion invested in childcare scholarships during the first two years of the Moore-Miller administration—childcare in Maryland lags most of the nation. The Comptroller of Maryland's December 2024 State of the Economy Report, [*Child Care and The Economy*](#), paints a grim picture. Already high costs continue to increase and the growing financial burden of early care and education (ECE) is burdening Maryland's families:

- Toddler-care and prekindergarten remains expensive, but infant care is particularly expensive; in Maryland, center-based infant care costs approximately \$19,906, per child. (In-state tuition at the University of Maryland is \$11,505.)
- The cost of ECE continues to outpace increases in cost of living. For example, between 2020 and 2023, tuition for infant care increased by 22.7% for center-based slots and 35% for family-care slots.
- Childcare for a single child costs the average family more than 20% of their household income. According to the Comptroller, the average cost of care for a single infant equals 13% of the median income for married couples and 41% for single-parent families.

While the burden on families is great, the cost to providers of ECE is equally unsustainable. From February 2020 until October 2024 the number of licensed childcare providers dropped by more than 15%. According to the Comptroller's report, the average wage for childcare workers is half the average wage of all workers in Maryland, and lower than that of most other service professionals.

As Maryland continues to lose childcare providers, Maryland families are left to chase fewer and fewer childcare seats. These are the consequences: a high cost of care drives many women who might otherwise choose to work to opt out. Maryland's ongoing childcare shortage suppresses women's workforce participation. The state's Labor Participation Rate (LPR) has seen the steepest decline in the nation and has not rebounded since the pandemic. Women's LPR significantly lags men's and the LPR for women with children is significantly less than that of women without children. Moreover, the LPR for "prime age" mothers with young children is more than 15% less than that of fathers with children the same age. The research is clear: lower



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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rates of maternal labor participation are a consequence of our broken system of early care and education. According to the Center for American Progress, ["Among parents who are not working full time, 3 in 5 say that they would choose to do so if they had access to affordable child care."](#)

Current mechanisms for funding childcare in Maryland do not work. In providing care for the youngest of our children, we see that the market has proven itself inadequate. Childcare is not scalable and is inherently costly. It is also a social good; it is "critical infrastructure" for families and vital to the functioning of our economy, in bad times as well as good times. It behooves us to determine how to fund childcare in a way that enables children, families, and the economy to flourish and is sustainable for providers. That is what HB862-Establishment of the Child Care Affordability Commission will help us to accomplish.

We ask for your support for SB452 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Tazeen Ahmad
WDC President

Kate Stein
WDC Children and Youth
Subcommittee

Cynthia Rubinstein
WDC Advocacy Chair

SB452.pdf

Uploaded by: Cynthia Webb

Position: FAV

SB452: State Board of Education-Membership-Early Childhood Development Professional

Testimony “In Favor”

My name is Cindi Webb and I am a proud advocate for early childhood education and small business. I currently own Frederick Country Day Montessori School and The Learning Bee, a preschool and childcare center. My businesses have been serving Frederick County since 2007. In addition, I do real estate vacation rentals and I am a John Maxwell coach. I am a mother of 5, grandmother to 2 and my husband and I were foster parents to 23 children, two of whom we were blessed to adopt. Educating, guiding and caring for children is my passion and mission.

I think we can all agree that Early childhood, from birth to age five, is recognized as a critical period for cognitive, social, and emotional development. Investing in quality early education during these formative years lays a strong foundation for future success. Research shows that **90% of a child's brain develops by age five**, forming the neural connections essential for future learning.

Beyond my mission, I am a dedicated business owner and a vital contributor to our economy. I have worked tirelessly to build a high-quality program that currently serves approximately 225 families and has impacted thousands over the years. Unfortunately, decisions—whether intentional or not—have had negative consequences on my business and others in the early education field.

It is essential that for-profit early childhood education centers have a voice. This is not just logical; it is practical. When decisions are made without considering the needs of small businesses, we are left scrambling to protect our livelihoods and advocate for necessary changes—many of which could have been avoided with our input from the start. MSCCA has been instrumental in being our voice for change.

For example, the Blueprint Mixed Delivery System is critical for the survival of small childcare providers. Without it, most of us would be forced to close. Without three- and four-year-olds in our programs, we simply wouldn't have the resources to sustain our businesses. The economic impact of losing childcare centers would be devastating—leaving families without options for infant, toddler, and two-year-old care.

We also fought for changes to the lead teacher requirements for Pre-K expansion and Blueprint grant programs. Initially, childcare providers were excluded because our teachers do not hold MSDE state teaching certifications. We had to actively lobby for this requirement to be reconsidered. If we had been included in the conversation from the

beginning, unnecessary obstacles could have been avoided, saving time, money, and resources—ultimately benefiting children and families in our communities.

Please support giving us a voice, ensuring small businesses are heard and our communities thrive.

Questions: Cindi@TheLearningBee.com

301-461-3003

SEIU Local 500 - SB452 - Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Elly Colmers

Position: FAV

Hearing Testimony February 12, 2025
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Service Employees International Union, Local 500

SB452

Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment

SUPPORT

SEIU Local 500 represents over 20,000 working people in Maryland, Washington D.C., and Virginia. Our union represents the support staff at the Montgomery County Public School system, Family Child Care Providers, Faculty and Staff at several Maryland colleges and universities, staff at non-profits and many other working people across the region. We urge a FAVORABLE Report on SB452 – **Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment**. We would also like to thank Senator King for her many years as an advocate for the child care community.

Affordable, high-quality child care is a foundational element of both our economy and the success of Maryland's future. Yet, most families continue to struggle to find or afford child care that meets their needs. SB 452 recognizes this reality and aims to find meaningful solutions that will support the workforce, bolster Maryland's businesses, and enhance our educational outcomes. Child care is central to the success of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, particularly the mixed delivery goals, which cannot be achieved without accessible child care.

The evidence is clear: child care impacts businesses and the economy in profound ways. Employers across Maryland require a dependable workforce, and affordable child care plays a key role in supporting that workforce. Businesses lose both profit and productivity when employees cannot access affordable, reliable child care.

The *State of the Economy* report from the Comptroller of Maryland, released on December 31, 2024, underscores the urgency of addressing the lack of child care availability in Maryland. According to the report, Maryland's labor force participation remains 3.8% below pre-pandemic levels, and our state has lost over 1,200 child care businesses—representing a 15.5% decline. Over 12,000 licensed child care slots have also been lost, or a 5.5% decrease in capacity. This is not just a child care crisis; it is a workforce and economic crisis. When parents cannot access affordable, consistent child care, they miss work, leading to lower household incomes and job loss.

Investing in affordable child care is an investment in early education, which helps children succeed in school and life. Yet, as noted in the Comptroller's report, child care in Maryland continues to decline,

threatening our progress on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. SB 452 seeks to address these challenges by establishing a commission that includes a broad cross-section of expert stakeholders who will study and make recommendations on child care affordability. This commission will examine critical issues, such as identifying barriers to a fiscally sustainable child care system, measuring the effectiveness of current investments, and addressing the need for adequate and sustainable resources for the child care infrastructure.

Furthermore, SB 452 will review various aspects of child care policy, including licensing regulations, the child care scholarship program, and quality initiatives, all with the guidance of the newly established commission. This effort will provide valuable insights into how we can improve both the affordability and quality of child care in Maryland, ensuring that working parents can fully participate in the labor force.

The Comptroller's report stresses the need for policymakers and the public to understand the shifts and changes within Maryland's child care industry in order to solve the challenges faced by working parents. SB 452 is an essential step toward addressing these issues and advising the General Assembly on meaningful reforms.

The Comptroller further highlights that the U.S. Treasury Department has labeled the nation's child care system a "market failure." The cost of providing high-quality care exceeds what many families can afford, and the report emphasizes the necessity of government intervention to address these market failures. SB 452 directly supports this vision by working toward solutions that will benefit Maryland's families, businesses, and economy.

Additionally, this bill takes into account the impact of child care on small businesses and equity. The child care workforce is predominantly made up of women, and many child care providers are small businesses, often owned and operated by women and minority groups. It is essential to support these businesses to ensure they can continue providing high-quality care to Maryland's children.

SB 452 will create a Child Care Affordability Commission that can bring together experts to address the systemic issues that have long plagued Maryland's child care industry. The recommendations of the Comptroller and the Administration highlight the importance of making child care affordable and accessible. Therefore, we recommend a favorable report.

MD Catholic Conference_SB 452_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Garrett O'Day

Position: FAV



February 12, 2025

SB 452

Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment

Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 452. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government. Additionally, we offer this testimony on behalf of the families of more than 50,000 students served by over 150 PreK-12 Catholic schools in Maryland.

Senate Bill 452 would establish a Maryland “Child Care Affordability Commission” to study and make recommendations on increasing affordability and access to child care for Maryland parents. The legislation calls for the commission to consider all aspects and components of child care in Maryland, including barriers to affordability and availability, as well as potential revenue streams to increase both of those components within our state.

Child Care is an essential component to supporting strong, economically secure families. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has supported proposals seeking to “expand assistance to parents with children and improve family formation and stability.” (*Letter to Congress on Child Tax Credit*, USCCB, 2016). This bill would indubitably lead to legislative recommendations for creative ways to expand access to child care.

Additionally, the Church supports this bill as a part of its priority interest in alleviating poverty in our state, as enabling working parents' continued access to child care services is an imperative part of combating poverty. Often, a barrier to sustainable and full-time employment is the availability and affordability of reliable child care services. The State should thus do all it can to support access to child care services for working parents.

The Conference appreciates your consideration, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 452.

SB 452 - MDCC-Child Care Affordability Commission

Uploaded by: Grason Wiggins

Position: FAV



MARYLAND
Chamber of Commerce

LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Favorable

Senate Bill 452

Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (Maryland Chamber) is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic health and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

The Maryland Chamber supports initiatives that increase access to childcare, incentivize more childcare providers to operate in Maryland, and increase childcare options for Marylanders. For these reasons, the Chamber is happy to participate as a member of the Commission established by Senate Bill 452.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests a **favorable report** on **SB 452**.

MDCHAMBER.ORG

60 West Street, Suite 100, Annapolis 21401 | 410-269-0642

DBCC SB0452 Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Hilary Roberts-King

Position: FAV

February 12, 2025

Favorable Testimony

SB0452

Child Care Affordability Commission- Establishment

I am Hilary Roberts-King the executive Director of the nonprofit Downtown Baltimore Child Care a nonprofit organization which has been providing child care in Baltimore city for 40 years. I stand before you today in strong support of establishing the *Child Care Affordability Commission*.

Child care is not just a family issue—it is an economic and workforce issue as Brooke Lierman's recent brief *Child Care and the Economy* details. All families in Maryland, no matter their economic status can face significant barriers when trying to access high-quality, affordable child care for their babies and toddlers.

Caring for infants is expensive no matter whether you are paying for care in your home, out of the home, or absorbing the opportunity cost of keeping a parent out of the workforce. High-quality educational care from qualified professionals costs even more.

For example, at one of Downtown Baltimore Child Care's state-accredited centers, infant care averages \$28,000 annually. Over 80% of that tuition is absorbed by wages and benefits for our teachers, leaving the rest for the center's insurance, food, materials, and building expenses. Child care teachers are educated and work long hours doing important work. They deserve a wage comparable to their education and experience, but sadly many Maryland providers struggle to offer a living wage based on revenue that comes from solely on tuition.

I am sure you can also imagine that after a family pays their monthly child care bill, they too do not always have sufficient funds to pay for housing, healthcare, and food.

We have a choice as Marylanders, we can strategically address the issue that young families are at best stretched to find affordable care for young children and at worst priced out of care. Or we can maintain the current status quo, where frequently a parent cannot find care or afford to go to work.

Identifying new and reliable revenue streams to support families with young children and the educated workforce who cares for children is critical. If we are serious about building a child care system that works for all Maryland families, we must invest in long-term solutions.

I urge you to support this commission so that we can take meaningful action to address the child care crisis in our state. Our children, our families, and our economy depend on it.

SB0452.pdf

Uploaded by: Kristen Miller

Position: FAV



Testimony of Celebree Schools in Support of SB0452

To: Members of the Maryland State Legislature

From: Celebree Schools, Maryland's Largest Child Care Provider

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB0452 – Establishment of the Child Care Affordability Commission

Honorable Members of the Maryland State Legislature,

My name is Kristen Miller, and I represent Celebree Schools, Maryland's largest provider of early childhood education and care. Celebree Schools operates 24 schools across the state, and we are committed to providing high-quality early education and child care to children and families across Maryland. I am writing today to express our support for SB0452, which establishes the Child Care Affordability Commission to study and make recommendations regarding child care affordability in the state.

As Maryland's largest child care provider, Celebree Schools has witnessed firsthand the significant financial barriers that families face in accessing affordable, quality child care. The establishment of the Child Care Affordability Commission is an important and necessary step toward addressing these challenges and ensuring that all Maryland families have access to the care and education they need to thrive.

Child care affordability has become one of the most pressing issues facing Maryland families today. For many working parents, the high cost of child care often means making difficult choices between providing quality care for their children and meeting other financial needs. At Celebree Schools, we believe that every child deserves access to quality early education, regardless of their family's income. However, the current cost of child care often places a significant strain on families, particularly those with multiple children or those in lower- and middle-income brackets.

SB0452 is a critical piece of legislation because it seeks to examine the factors that drive up child care costs and find viable solutions to reduce financial barriers for families. By establishing the Child Care Affordability Commission, the state is taking an important step toward ensuring that affordable child care options are available to all Maryland families, which is vital for the well-being of both children and their parents.



As the largest child care provider in Maryland, Celebree Schools is dedicated to maintaining high standards in early childhood education. We understand that affordable care must also be high-quality care, as the first five years of a child's life are critical for cognitive, emotional, and social development. This is why we fully support SB0452's efforts to explore how to make quality child care more affordable, without compromising the standards that are necessary for children's long-term success.

The commission's work to study and recommend policies that support high-quality child care programs will benefit not only families but also providers across the state. It is essential that the recommendations resulting from this study help child care providers maintain high educational standards while ensuring financial sustainability. This will create an environment in which both children and educators can thrive.

The affordability of child care is closely tied to the economic stability of the child care workforce. At Celebree Schools, we are deeply committed to supporting our educators and staff, recognizing that they play a pivotal role in the development of young learners. However, the current cost structure of child care in Maryland makes it challenging to offer competitive wages to the professionals who work tirelessly to provide care and education to children.

The Child Care Affordability Commission, through its study, should also examine the need for policies that support workforce development in the child care sector. We urge the commission to prioritize recommendations that address compensation and professional development opportunities for child care workers, ensuring that the individuals who care for and teach our children are fairly compensated for their invaluable work.

We urge the members of the Maryland State Legislature to pass SB0452 and commit to ensuring that child care is both accessible and affordable for all families in the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristen Miller

Director of Education

Celebree Schools

COA_written testimony_SB452 Child Care Affordabili

Uploaded by: Laura Jahromi

Position: FAV



February 12, 2025

Testimony Regarding Senate Bill 452- Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment

The Montgomery County [Children's Opportunity Alliance](#) is a locally legislated Early Care and Education Coordinating Entity that brings community together to create a more equitable, accessible, high-quality, and sustainable early childhood system that narrows disparities and puts young children on a path to reach their greatest potential.

We urge you to support SB452 – Child Care Affordability Commission – which will be an important step for Maryland to recognize the current child care crisis and begin the difficult work for studying and making recommendations that are right for our community.

According to the Maryland Family Network's 2024 Child Care Demographics Report¹, the average cost of child care accounts for 25.7% of the median income – with Montgomery County costs the highest in the state at 27.1% of area median income. The federal government recommends that families should pay no more than 7% of their household income on child care – yet in Maryland the average family with young children is paying a quarter of their income. The rising costs of child care is creating a crisis of access and affordability for many families with young children and it's time to do something about it. There are numerous examples of successful interventions around the country; Maryland only needs to decide to take action.

The child care industry is a fundamentally flawed business model, in which the true cost of providing quality services costs more than parents are able to pay for it. This results in extremely low wages for early childhood educators, constant stress and turnover in the industry, and lower quality of education programming, all of which impacts the critical early education children are able to receive and the ability of parents to remain in the workforce. It is an economic imperative to create systems solutions that improve access for more children and their families.

Submitted on behalf of the Children's Opportunity Alliance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Jahromi".

Laura Jahromi, Manager, Strategic Initiatives
The Montgomery County Children's Opportunity Alliance
1801 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852 | 301-450-1871 |
laura@mocochildren.org

¹ <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/Maryland%202.0.pdf>

SB452 MALMB Testimony.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Lisa Kovacs

Position: FAV



**Local power, collective voice
for Maryland's children, youth and families**

February 12, 2025

SUPPORT – SB452 – Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Local Management Boards, I am writing in support of **SB452 – Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment** which will establish the Child Care Affordability Commission to study and make recommendations regarding child care affordability in the state. Local Management Boards in each county and jurisdiction in the State of Maryland conduct community needs assessments and address the needs of children and families in their respective jurisdiction. This bill will address the challenges families and children face finding affordable quality childcare in Maryland.

In September 2024, the Maryland Association of Local Management Boards and the Anne Arundel Early Childhood Childcare Taskforce hosted the first annual statewide summit and third annual county summit to bring awareness to needs for the childcare ecosystem. Affordability has become one of the barriers for parents finding childcare, which directly impacts their ability to work, and was also identified as a need by the Comptroller of Maryland. [One of the recommendations](#) from this summit was to create a commission to examine the affordability and availability of childcare. We believe a commission will allow the opportunity for the state to identify and solve issues that make childcare unaffordable for parents.

We urge you to support SB452 – Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment to support establishing the Child Care Affordability Commission.

Sincerely,

Pamela M. Brown, PhD
Chair

SB 452

Uploaded by: Lynn Nash

Position: FAV



MARYLAND MILITARY COALITION

Serving Veterans through Legislative Advocacy

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan
Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Request for **FAVORABLE Report With Amendments – SB 452 – Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment**

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Distinguished Members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

Senate Bill 452, “Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment” is a critical bill that has the potential to influence recruitment and retention of uniformed service members, now and well into the future. This Commission seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Obstacles to obtaining a fiscally sustainable system of child care and early childhood education that meets the needs of children living in poverty and children at risk of living in poverty;
2. Barriers to increasing the supply of child care while offering additional supports and incentives to achieve and maintain quality;
3. Measures to ensure the success and sustainability of the Child Care Scholarship Program for working families and any additional measures to support working families, including business tax credits and other incentives for investments in child care;
4. Revenue streams to create an adequate and sustainable source of funding for child care in the State.
5. What should be the economic threshold the State should use to cap the cost of child care for families in the State; and
6. What are any other relevant issues concerning access to or the quality or affordability of child care, as determined by the Commission.

We know that availability of child care in the community is extremely limited, and the costs to Marylanders are exorbitant. Here are some examples:

- The [National Database of Childcare Prices](#), part of the Women’s Bureau of the Department of Labor, offers the most comprehensive look yet at how child care costs vary across 2,360 counties in 47 states.

Favorable with Amendments – SB 452 – Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment

- In a report released in 2022, the average cost for parents with young children in Montgomery County, where I live, was **15.6% of their total income**. The report **calls these prices as “untenable for families”**.
- Child care prices were consistently higher for infant care, with the median price for **one** child in center-based infant care ranging from **\$10,848*** in small counties to **\$21,533*** in very large counties.
- Among home-based providers, infant care ranged from **\$8,616*** in small counties to **\$16,587*** in very large counties.
- Among preschool-aged children, center-based prices **per child** ranged from **\$8,712*** in small counties to **\$17,457*** in very large counties.
- Home-based child care prices ranged from **\$7,309*** in small counties to **\$15,634*** in very large counties.
- The burden is even **higher for families with multiple children in before- and after-school care or center-based child care**. The analysis showed **29 percent of families with children under 6 have two or more in that age-group**.
- **High child care costs are keeping some families — especially women — out of the labor market**, the Women’s Bureau report noted.
- The analysis found that even a 10 percent increase in child care costs causes a 1 percentage point decrease in moms in the workforce. A 50% increase dropped the number of employed mothers by 2 percentage points, and in counties where child care costs more than doubled, maternal employment dropped 4 percentage points

***2024 inflation-adjusted prices**

Twenty-two percent of active-duty spouses are unemployed¹, five to six times the rate of their counterparts². Obtaining reliable and affordable child care is a primary barrier to military spouse employment³. Increasing the availability of lower cost care options in the community, especially for service member families is important, especially regarding recruitment and retention.

This bill specifies a number of required Commission members. However, it makes no mention of a military-focused child care proponent. The Maryland military entity **best able to provide up-to-date and accurate data about military child care** is the Maryland Military Installation Council (the Council). Therefore, we ask that the **bill be amended** to include the **Council as a required member**.

Costs associated with this bill should be limited. A fiscal note is not yet available, however, as child care availability has the potential to greatly impact the Maryland economy, costs should not be a deciding factor, even in this deficit budget cycle.

¹ [2022 Military Family Lifestyle Survey](#). Blue Star Families (2023).

² Women 16 and over. Labor Force Statistics from the [Current Population Survey](#), Dec 2024.

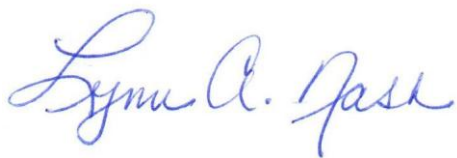
³ [2022 Military Family Lifestyle Survey Comprehensive Report: Child Care Spotlight](#) Blue Star Families (2023)

Favorable with Amendments – SB 452 – Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment

The Maryland Military Coalition is a registered non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization comprised of 22 prominent Maryland-based veteran and military groups, representing over 150,000 service-connected individuals, including those currently serving, veterans, retirees and their families, caregivers, and survivors.

The Coalition wishes to thank Senator King for her continued support of the Uniformed Services Community.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn A. Nash". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lynn" being more prominent than the last name "Nash".

Lynn A. Nash
CAPT (R), U.S. Public Health Service
Communications Director
District 31

1 Attachment – Member Organizations of the Maryland Military Coalition



Member Organizations of the Maryland Military Coalition

Air Force Sergeants Association

American Military Society

American Minority Veterans Research Project

Association of the United States Navy

Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service

Disabled American Veterans

Fleet Reserve Association of Annapolis

Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A

Maryland Air National Guard Retirees' Association

Maryland Veterans Chamber of Commerce

Military Officers Association of America

Military Order of the Purple Heart

Military Order of the World Wars

Montford Point Marines of America

National Association of Black Veterans

National Association of Retired Federal Employees, Maryland Veterans

Naval Enlisted Reserve Association

NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers

Platoon 22

Reserve Organization of America

Society of Military Widows

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Final SB 452 Child Care Affordability.pdf

Uploaded by: RUBY DANIELS

Position: FAV



**Maryland State
Family Child Care
Association**
www.msfccca.org

Testimony-Senate Bill 452
Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment
Submitted by Ruby Daniels
President, Maryland State Family Child Care Association
February 12, 2025

Position-Favorable

Dear Chair Feldman and Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy and Environment committee,

My name is Ruby Daniels, and I serve as **the President of the Maryland State Family Child Care Association**, representing thousands of family child care providers across our state. I have been a dedicated family child care provider for over 30 years, working firsthand with families who rely on affordable, high-quality child care.

Childcare is an essential service, yet the rising cost has put it out of reach for too many working families. At the same time, childcare providers—especially family child care programs—are struggling with increasing operational costs, from food and supplies to meeting regulatory requirements. The financial burden on both parents and providers is unsustainable, and the need for comprehensive, long-term solutions has never been more urgent.

The establishment of the **Child Care Affordability Commission** under Senate Bill 452 is a critical step forward. This commission will create a space where key stakeholders—including providers, parents, policymakers, business leaders, government, comptroller and experts—can come together to address the challenges facing our child care system. By bringing diverse perspectives to the table, we can develop meaningful, data-driven solutions to support families, stabilize the workforce, and ensure that high-quality child care remains accessible and sustainable.

A well-functioning child care system is not just a family issue—it is an economic issue. When families cannot find or afford child care, parents, especially mothers, are forced to leave the workforce, impacting businesses and the broader economy. Supporting this commission is an investment in Maryland's working families, its child care providers, and its economic future.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 452 and ensure that Maryland takes a proactive approach to making child care more affordable and sustainable for all.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ruby Daniels
President, MSFCCA
Rubygd33@gmail.com

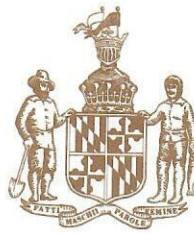


**Maryland State
Family Child Care
Association**
www.msfccca.org

SB452-King-Sponsor Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Nancy King

Position: FAV



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Senate Bill 452 - Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment

February 12, 2025

Mister Chairman and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

In a December 2024 report by the Comptroller of Maryland entitled *STATE OF THE ECONOMY SERIES: CHILD CARE AND THE ECONOMY*, Comptroller Lierman wrote, “The US Treasury Department has called the nation’s child care system a “market failure” because parents are required to pay out-of-pocket for the cost of care in order to work, but the cost of providing high-quality care is more expensive than many parents can afford. Government intervention is necessary to address market failures. As state leaders, we must do all we can to ensure that parents, especially those with young children, have affordable and accessible child care options and the opportunity to fully participate in the labor force.”

Senate Bill 452 will establish a Child Care Affordability Commission to gather together government officials, child care providers, business leaders and policy experts to work together to solve the problem of affordable child care that is grappling our state and our nation. The Commission will be charged to study and make recommendations regarding child care affordability in the state including:

- (1) an identification of:
 - a. obstacles to obtaining a fiscally sustainable system of child care and early childhood education that meets the needs of children living in poverty and children at risk of living in poverty;
 - b. barriers to increasing the supply of child care while offering additional supports and incentives to achieve and maintain quality;
 - c. measures to ensure the success and sustainability of the Child Care Scholarship Program for working families and any additional measures to support working families, including business tax credits and other incentives for investments in child care; and
 - d. revenue streams to create an adequate and sustainable source of funding for child care in the State;
- (2) a determination of the economic threshold the State should use to cap the cost of child care for families in the State; and
- (3) an examination of any other relevant issues concerning access to or the quality or affordability of child care, as determined by the Commission

The Commission is required to file an interim report by January 1, 2026, and a final report would be due to the General Assembly by December 1, 2026. The Commission would be allowed to hire outside consultants that could be paid by philanthropic contributions to the state.

Comptroller Lierman's report makes reference to national research that establishes a clear link between increased access to quality, affordable child care, and increased Labor Force Participation. It further notes that access to child care is also associated with improved productivity, increased state revenues, and greater economic security and earnings potential for women. Investments in Maryland's child care industry are essential to equitably growing Maryland's economy and keeping Maryland competitive, not to mention the educational and social benefits that children can receive from high quality care early in life.

For all those reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 452.

SB0452 - tiffany jones .pdf

Uploaded by: Tiffany Jones

Position: FAV

****Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 0452 – Child Care Affordability Commission****

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee

My name is Tiffany Jones and I am a family childcare educator and owner of Precious Moments Family Childcare – a NAFCC Accredited high quality child care program offering state funded Pre-K located in Rockville, Maryland. I am also the Maryland State Rep & Policy Fellow for the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) and President of the Family Child Care Association of Montgomery County (FCCAMC). I am writing to express my strong support for Maryland Senate Bill 0452, which establishes the Child Care Affordability Commission. As someone who works directly with children and families, I can confidently say that it is essential for the voices of child care providers, especially family child care educators, to be included in any conversation about child care affordability.

I am deeply concerned about the growing barriers to providing high-quality, affordable child care for the families who rely on our services. The challenges we face daily in the child care industry are real and pressing. From the rising costs of operation to the struggles of ensuring fair wages for our dedicated educators, it is clear that the current system is not sustainable without comprehensive reform. Senate Bill 0452 provides an opportunity for us to address these issues and build a more equitable and accessible system for families across Maryland.

The inclusion of child care providers in this commission is vital. We are the ones on the ground, working with children and families every day. We are uniquely positioned to speak to the obstacles preventing the expansion of quality child care. Many of these challenges are related to the lack of financial support for providers, which limits our ability to hire and retain skilled educators and expand services. Additionally, without sustainable funding, we cannot offer the necessary supports for families, including those who are most in need of affordable care.

One of the key components of SB0452 is the focus on identifying obstacles to creating a fiscally sustainable system of child care. As a provider, I can tell you that these obstacles are multifaceted. The costs associated with running a child care program—such as staffing, facilities, training, and materials—are often not reflected in the reimbursement rates set by state subsidies. These discrepancies lead to difficult decisions about how we allocate limited resources. We want to provide the best possible care for children, but without adequate financial support, it becomes increasingly difficult to do so without getting reimbursed the cost of quality care.

Furthermore, I fully support the bill's emphasis on expanding access to child care while maintaining quality. This is a delicate balance that cannot be achieved without input from those of us who are actively engaged in providing child care services. We must find innovative ways to support child care providers financially, whether through

business tax credits, a child care scholarship programs that reimburses the cost of quality care equitably between childcare programs , or other incentives that can help us grow and sustain our services.

Ultimately, what we need is a system that supports both the families who need affordable child care and the educators who provide that care. Senate Bill 0452 is a step toward achieving that goal. By including the authentic voices of child care providers in the conversation, we ensure that any recommendations made by the Commission are grounded in the reality of the child care system.

I urge you to support SB0452. It is an essential piece of legislation that has the potential to create meaningful change for families, child care providers, and the workforce as a whole. Let's ensure that our state's child care system is one that is accessible, affordable, and sustainable for all.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Jones

NAFCC Policy Fellow & NAFCC MD State Rep

President, Family Child Care Association of Montgomery County (FCCAMC)

Board Member, Children's Opportunity Alliance (COA)

Educator & Owner, Precious Moments Family Childcare

301-660-7633

Follow us on instagram: @preciousmomentsfamilychildcare

Follow us on Facebook: @wearepreciousmomentsfamilychildcare

Website: www.preciousmomentsfamilychildcare.weebly.com

SB452.The Arc Maryland. SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Ande Kolp

Position: FWA



The Arc Maryland
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Suite 140
Columbia, MD 21046
T 410.571.9320
www.thearcmd.org

Senate Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee

SB 452: Child Care Affordability Commission – Establishment

February 12, 2025

Position: Support with Amendment

The Arc Maryland is the largest statewide advocacy organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights and quality of life of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Currently, the Maryland State Department of Education partners with certain organizations to provide **medically-based child care and early education services to children with medical diagnoses and those who have developmental delays, physical disabilities, and behavioral issues requiring specialized care**. The Arc Montgomery County operates an inclusive, specialized infant and childcare program, known as the Karasik Center. The program is a model, not only in our state, but nationally recognized for programming that supports children with and without special healthcare needs to receive quality childcare- together. In The Arc Montgomery County program, all children benefit from the ratios of care and individualized approach.

We believe the perspectives of a therapeutic childcare provider, like The Arc Montgomery County, would be very valuable for the input they could provide about the affordability experience through the lens of parents of children with complex care needs. For this reason, we respectfully ask for an amendment adding:

(#) one representative of The Arc Montgomery County Karasik Family, Infant & Childcare Center designated by the chief executive officer of The Arc Montgomery County.

We apologize we were not able to have a conversation with madame Sponsor King prior to this hearing today and we truly appreciate her consideration of this request.

For more information, please contact: Ande Kolp, Executive Director
akolp@thearcmd.org

SB452.Council.SWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel London

Position: FWA



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
SB 452: Child Care Affordability Commission - Establishment
February 12, 2025
Position: Support with Amendments

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to lead the lives they want with the support they need. As such, we are closely involved in policy, practice, and legal changes that increase access to quality and quality child care where children with and without disabilities learn, play, and succeed together. As such, we support SB 452, ***with an amendment to include a member of the Commission with knowledge and expertise about issues affecting young children with disabilities and their families.***

WHAT does this legislation do?

- Establishes the Child Care Affordability Commission to study and made recommendations about child care affordability in Maryland.

WHY is it important?

- Increasing access to early care and education for Maryland's children is critical for their development. This is particularly true for young children with disabilities who need more access and opportunity to learn and play alongside their peers without disabilities.
- A lot of progress has been made to support the child care needs of working families. Significant investments in the Child Care Scholarship Program (CCSP) have been made to expand access to quality child care for more families who struggle to find, keep, and pay for child care.
- Child care programs must provide children with disabilities and their families an equal opportunity to participate by providing reasonable modifications, accommodations, and appropriate auxiliary aids and services needed for effective communication.ⁱ Some of these additional accommodations may be costly. In recognition of that, **Maryland law allows for increased CCSP reimbursement rates to a child care provider for the additional costs of providing one-time or ongoing accommodations to a child with a disability – up to 15% above the traditional reimbursement rates or more if approved by MSDE.**ⁱⁱ

By reviewing lessons learned, identifying solutions to challenges, and creating a path forward, the Commission will help even more Maryland families. **By including a member with knowledge and expertise about families of young children with disabilities, and the child care laws, policies, and practices that affect them, the Commission will be even more effective.**

Contact: Rachel London, Executive Director, RLondon@md-council.org

ⁱ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. § 12101 (2009).

ⁱⁱ COMAR 13A.14.06.11(E)(5).