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WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February 26, 2025

To: Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Vice Chair
Ways and Means Committee

The Maryland Women's Caucus is proud to express our unanimous support for **HB1475: Office of Child Care Advisory Council - Publicly Funded Prekindergarten - Analysis and Report (Mixed Delivery Model Viability Act)**. This important legislation seeks to ensure that Maryland's mixed delivery, publicly funded prekindergarten system—established under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future—can effectively serve the needs of our youngest learners and the families who rely on it.

Access to quality, affordable early childhood education is a critical issue for Maryland's women, particularly for working mothers who rely on child care and early education programs to ensure their children are supported while they are in the workforce. By conducting a thorough analysis of the mixed delivery model, HB1475 seeks to identify the strengths and challenges of this system, ensuring that it meets the needs of both children and families while expanding access to prekindergarten education.

For many Maryland women, particularly those from low-income and underserved communities, the availability and affordability of early childhood education are essential to their ability to remain in the workforce. As the primary caregivers in most households, women are disproportionately affected by gaps in the early education system. The ability to access affordable, high-quality prekindergarten programs not only supports the development of their children but also empowers women to pursue career opportunities and achieve economic independence. However, the quality and availability of these programs must be carefully assessed and adjusted to ensure all families can benefit. HB1475 is an important step in that process.

For these reasons, the Maryland Women's Caucus strongly urges the Ways and Means Committee to issue a favorable report for HB1475. By expanding access to high-quality prekindergarten education, we can improve the lives of Maryland's women and children, support working families, and foster a more equitable and prosperous Maryland for all.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to improving the lives of Marylanders.