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WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

February 12, 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 HB185: Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program - Funding - Alterations. This critical legislation ensures continued funding for the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program for three years, providing essential health and medical-based child care services to children under the age of six who experience developmental delays, physical disabilities, or delays in social, emotional, or behavioral functioning.

Access to therapeutic child care is a lifeline for families navigating the challenges of raising children with disabilities and behavioral health concerns. Many of these families, particularly mothers, bear the primary responsibility for coordinating care, balancing work obligations, and ensuring their children receive the specialized support they need. HB185 directly addresses this burden by guaranteeing sustained funding for these critical programs, ensuring that families do not face gaps in care due to financial uncertainty.

Women in Maryland, especially working mothers, are disproportionately impacted by the availability—or lack thereof—of specialized child care services. Without adequate therapeutic care options, many women are forced to make difficult choices between their careers and their children's well-being. This legislation upholds a commitment to equity by recognizing the unique challenges faced by mothers of children with disabilities and reinforcing the state's role in supporting their ability to remain in the workforce while securing essential care for their children.

HB185 is a necessary and impactful step toward providing stability for Maryland families and ensuring that the most vulnerable children have access to early interventions that improve long-term outcomes. We respectfully urge the **Ways and Means Committee** to issue a **favorable report** on HB185. By doing so, we take a meaningful step toward strengthening Maryland's commitment to women, families, and the well-being of our youngest residents.

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