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WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2/18/2026

To: Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair

Delegate Anne R. Kaiser, Vice Chair

Appropriations Committee

The Maryland Women's Caucus is proud to express its support for **HB 561 – Maryland Child Care Credential Program – Extension of Funding.**

HB 561 supports the Maryland Child Care Credential Program, a voluntary professional development initiative designed to strengthen the quality and stability of the childcare workforce across the State. The program provides participants with approved training, meaningful work experience, and opportunities for professional growth. Extending funding for this program supports childcare professionals in advancing their careers while producing positive outcomes for children and families throughout Maryland.

Children's social, emotional, and cognitive development is directly influenced by the quality of care they receive. Supporting childcare professionals through continued education and training improves classroom environments and enhances providers' ability to support early learning, language development, literacy, and overall child well-being. Well-trained providers are better equipped to understand developmental milestones and tailor activities that foster healthy growth.

Maryland continues to face significant challenges related to early literacy and educational achievement. Contributing factors include ineffective instructional practices, learning disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, persistent poverty, and chronic absenteeism. Addressing these challenges requires a strong early childhood workforce equipped with the skills necessary to support children before they enter formal schooling.

HB 561 encourages childcare providers and educators to pursue continued education and job training, strengthening their ability to foster positive social behaviors, reduce classroom disruptions, and implement effective behavior management strategies. These efforts help establish a strong foundation for lifelong learning and academic success.

Children represent the future of our communities, and it is our shared responsibility to ensure that those entrusted with their care are well trained, supported, and valued. Investing in high-quality childcare is an investment in the long-term prosperity and well-being of Maryland's families.

For these reasons, the Maryland Women's Caucus respectfully urges a **favorable report** on HB 561.