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WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF MARYLAND
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

March 3, 2026

To: Delegate Kriselda Valderrama, Chair

Delegate Lorig Charkoudian, Vice Chair

Economic Matters Committee

The Maryland Women's Caucus proudly supports HB 1259 – Zoning Authorities – Operation of Family Child Care Homes – Prohibitions and Requirements.

HB 1259 ensures that licensed family child care homes may operate without unnecessary local zoning barriers. The bill prohibits local jurisdictions from denying or restricting the operation of certain family child care homes if they meet the licensing requirements established by the Maryland State Department of Education. It further requires that these homes be designated as a residential activity and permitted use.

Access to affordable, reliable child care remains one of the greatest challenges facing working families across Maryland. Family child care homes are a critical component of the child care infrastructure, particularly for parents who work nontraditional hours or live in communities with limited center-based options. When local zoning laws restrict or prohibit these small, licensed providers, families are left with fewer choices and longer waitlists.

HB 1259 creates consistency across jurisdictions and reinforces that licensed family child care homes are legitimate residential uses—not commercial intrusions. By preventing arbitrary zoning restrictions, the bill supports small business owners, many of whom are women and women of color, who operate child care programs out of their homes. These providers play a vital role in both early childhood development and local economic stability.

This legislation strengthens Maryland's workforce by making it easier for parents to remain employed while ensuring children have access to safe, regulated care. It advances economic opportunity for providers and promotes equitable access to child care for families throughout the state.

For these reasons, the Maryland Women's Caucus respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 1259.