



**Testimony Concerning HB 1539:
“Grant Applications and Reporting - Uniform Forms and Requirements”
Submitted to the House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 10, 2020**

Position: Support

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability, affordability and quality of child care, family support services, and early education. We are the recipients of state grants to administer the Maryland Child Care Resource Network and the Family Support Center Network. Funding for both of these networks is provided by the Maryland State Department of Education as well as federal and local agencies.

In Maryland, State grant programs can vary in their audit requirements, invoicing and payment practices, and financial oversight and controls during implementation of the grants. Not only does this fragmented system require duplication of effort, but in many cases the “business practices” adopted on a program-by-program basis often impose additional hardships on grantees. Compliance with conflicting or redundant requirements often consumes resources that could be used for State services. The lack of standardization prevents efficiencies that could be obtained at the State level by streamlining and centralizing common steps and processes.

HB 1539 with the amendments to be offered on behalf of the sponsors, would establish a process for the development of (1) a standardized application format, common budget and financial reporting standards, and standard forms, and (2) a version of the OMB Uniform Guidance, “customized” or modified and with variances appropriate for use across most state grant-making entities. The process is intended to assure strong participation by affected, providers and other grant recipients, including local governments that often are “intermediaries” passing federal or state funds through to recipients.

MFN urges your favorable consideration of HB 1539.