



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 608

Early Childhood Education-Child Care Providers Support Grant Program. (The Child Care Provider Support Act)

House Ways and Means Committee
February 5, 2021

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Julia Gross, Co-Chairs

Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth
Baltimore Jewish Council
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Catholic Charities
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Family League of Baltimore
Fuel Fund of Maryland
Health Care for the Homeless
Homeless Persons
Representation Project
Job Opportunities Task Force
League of Women Voters of Maryland
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland Catholic Conference
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Community Action
Partnership
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Paul's Place
Public Justice Center
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore
Welfare Advocates

Marylanders Against Poverty

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Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly supports HB 608, which would provide financial relief for childcare providers in Maryland that are struggling or closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Grants would be able to pay for rent, payroll and other necessary expenses to ensure programs continue. Particularly important to MAP, eligibility would require that the providers accept State scholarship vouchers and prioritize grant recipients from high poverty zip codes.

Childcare providers are struggling, many have closed and many more will close before the pandemic ends. According to a June 2020 by the Maryland Family Network, 67% of childcare providers experienced a loss in revenue due to Covid-19.¹ More alarming, over 50% of providers reported that an extended closure would force them to close permanently.² To-date 16% of providers have closed in Maryland.

Without assistance, we are going to be in new crisis once people return to their traditional offices, a lack of childcare providers. This will be particularly burdensome to single parents/guardians and women who are already disproportionately affected by poverty. Providing financial and other supports for childcare to offset reduced enrollment and increased COVID related expenses will help all families, but especially low-income families who will have to choose between going back to the office or taking care of their children.

MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 608.

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.

¹ <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/2020%20MFN%20Caring%20During%20Covid%20%28bg%29%201.3%20Pages%5B1%5D.pdf>

² <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/2020%20MFN%20Caring%20During%20Covid%20%28bg%29%201.3%20Pages%5B1%5D.pdf>