



January 10, 2025

Chair Tenley Peterson
Arlington County Planning Commission
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chair Peterson,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports the proposed child care Zoning Ordinance amendments on the Planning Commission's agenda. The Chamber commends the County for proposing the amendments, and we appreciate Staff's work in drafting these amendments. We request that the Planning Commission recommend these amendments for adoption by the County Board at its January 25 meeting.

The proposed amendments will provide greater flexibility to child care facilities and providers. Access to affordable child care is a key driver of affordability for families who live or work in Arlington. It is crucial that Arlington families have accessible and affordable child care options. Adjusting regulations on child care facilities to make the process of operating, opening, or expanding child care facilities easier is a solution with clear benefits to child care providers and the public at large.

Permitting child care facilities in the Special Development (S-D) district by use permit expands the range of locations for child care centers to all zoning districts. Given the limited options for some providers or facilities, it is anticipated that this additional flexibility will have a positive impact upon the supply of the County's child care slots. Additionally, enabling by-right approval of family day care homes with 10-to-12 children will simplify the process for smaller child care providers.

These amendments will build upon the 2018 Child Care Initiative and its Action Plan, which the Chamber supported, and help promote accessible, available, and quality child care for both our residents and our workforce. We urge the Planning Commission to recommend these amendments for adoption and implementation. We look forward to their implementation, and to supporting other proposals in the future that will further promote child care accessibility and availability.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates
President & CEO

CC: Planning Commission Members; County Manager Mark Schwartz; Director Samia Byrd, Community Planning and Housing Development.