



March 11, 2026

The Honorable Billy Hickman
Chair
Senate Committee on Education and Youth
304-A CLOB
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

The Honorable Chuck Payne
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Education and Youth
432 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

RE: Support for SB 554

Dear Chair Hickman, Vice Chair Payne and members of the Committee:

As a representative of Georgia's 1.3 million small businesses, Small Business Majority encourages you to support SB 554, legislation that would invest in the expansion of affordable, high-quality childcare.

Small businesses are the backbone of Georgia's economy, yet many are facing persistent workforce challenges. One of the most significant barriers to workforce participation is the lack of accessible and affordable childcare. When parents cannot secure reliable childcare, it impacts both them and their employers. Small business owners [say](#) that due to employees' childcare issues, they've experienced unplanned work absences (62%), had an employee quit (30%), had a job candidate turn down an offer (30%), had an employee turn down a promotion (27%) and had to eventually fire an employee who was routinely absent (16%).¹

This legislation would help address these challenges by requiring the Department of Early Care and Learning to create and administer the Georgia Child Care Facilities Program to support the establishment and expansion of facilities for childcare learning centers and family childcare learning homes. By supporting childcare providers and increasing the number of available childcare slots, this legislation would help working parents—including many entrepreneurs—participate more fully in the economy. Access to reliable childcare is not only a family issue; it is a critical economic infrastructure that allows small businesses to recruit and retain employees.

This legislation would also benefit small business owners who operate childcare centers themselves. Many childcare providers face barriers to expansion due to limited access to capital and resources. By providing grant opportunities and technical assistance, this bill could help these small businesses grow, increase capacity and better serve their communities.

Strengthening childcare infrastructure ultimately strengthens the entire small business ecosystem. When parents have access to reliable childcare, they can participate in the workforce and are better able to start and grow small businesses. We urge you to support SB 554 to strengthen Georgia's economy and help Georgia's entrepreneurs thrive.

Sincerely,

Rachel Shanklin
Georgia Director
Small Business Majority

¹ "Opinion Poll: Small businesses support policy solutions to address our nation's childcare challenges." Small Business Majority. April 9, 2024. <https://smallbusinessmajority.org/our-research/workforce/opinion-poll-small-businesses-support-policy-solutions-address-our-nation-s-childcare-challenges>