



Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

Testimony in Support of HB 1259
"Zoning Authorities - Operation of Family Child Care Homes - Prohibitions and Requirements"
Submitted to the House Economic Matters Committee
March 3, 2026

Position: Support

The Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEYC) supports HB 1259, which would prohibit local jurisdictions from denying or restricting the operation of licensed family child care homes and large family child care homes through zoning ordinances.

MDAEYC is a professional association of 1,700 early childhood educators, allied professionals, and families. We promote high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood education practice, policy, and research.

We support HB 1259 because it removes barriers to small business growth and increases child care supply. The number of licensed home-based child care programs in Maryland declined from 4,460 in 2022 to 4,067 in 2024—a loss of 393 programs.¹ Family child care providers are small business owners operating in their communities. When local zoning restrictions prevent licensed providers from operating, Maryland loses both small businesses and the child care capacity that working families depend on. This legislation supports entrepreneurship while addressing the child care shortage that limits labor force participation and negatively impacts Maryland's economy.

This legislation maintains all quality and safety protections. The bill applies only to homes meeting State Department of Education licensing requirements. By designating licensed family child care as a residential activity and a permitted use in residential zones, this legislation removes arbitrary barriers while ensuring providers meet rigorous state standards.

MDAEYC supports this legislation and respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 1259.

If you have any questions, please contact: Stephanie Schaefer, PhD., at stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org or 240-441-3280.

¹ National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2026). Maryland State Fact Sheet. https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/maryland_naeyc_state_fact_sheet_2026.pdf