



House Bill 1259

Zoning Authorities - Operation of Family Child Care Homes - Prohibitions and Requirements

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Economic Matters Committee

Date: March 5, 2026

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1259 **WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill limits local jurisdictions' ability to regulate the siting of family child care homes and large family child care homes within residential neighborhoods.

Counties recognize and strongly share the urgency of expanding child care capacity. Affordable, reliable child care is essential for Maryland families' day-to-day stability, and it is also a key workforce and economic development driver for employers deciding where to locate, expand, and hire.

However, as drafted, HB 1259 could allow an unlimited number of family child care homes or large family child care homes to locate within a single neighborhood, without meaningful consideration of neighborhood-scale infrastructure constraints. While counties recognize the State Department of Education's oversight role for family child care homes, that authority does not extend to managing localized impacts on surrounding streets and public facilities. Under the bill, multiple homes serving as many as 12 children each could locate on the same street, without any review of issues such as parking congestion during drop-off and pick-up, traffic and street capacity, or emergency vehicle access during high-volume periods. Counties suggest a more reasonable middle ground.

The county amendments offered on the following page are intended to preserve the bill's purpose, expanding child care options, while retaining limited local flexibility to address serious, demonstrable infrastructure and public safety concerns where they arise.

For these reasons, MACo urges the Committee to issue a report of **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** on HB 1259 (*amendments follow on the next page*).

MACo Amendments for HB 1259:

Amendment #1 – Clarifies that the bill’s provisions apply only when a family child care home or large family child care home is located at least 0.25 miles from another such home. This allows counties to better manage neighborhood impacts while still supporting expanded access to child care.

On page 2, in line 18 after “**EDUCATION**”, insert,

AND IS AT LEAST .25 MILES FROM THE NEAREST FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME OR LARGE FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME.