

26102915D

**HOUSE BILL NO. 259**

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 9, 2026

*A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 22.1-289.05:2, relating to early childhood care and education; Home-Based Child Care Provider Start-Up Grants Pilot Program established; requirements.*

Patron—Simonds

Committee Referral Pending

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 22.1-289.05:2 as follows:****§ 22.1-289.05:2. Home-Based Child Care Provider Start-Up Grants Pilot Program.**

*A. With such funds as may be provided for such purpose pursuant to the general appropriation act, there is hereby established the Home-Based Child Care Provider Start-Up Grants Pilot Program (the Program), whereby funds are provided to Child Care Aware of Virginia to work in conjunction with Ready Region organizations, the U.S. Department of Defense, Early Childhood Navigators at the Department, local governing bodies, and private home-based child care providers to expand the supply of licensed home-based child care providers in the Commonwealth, promote the safety of licensed home-based child care providers, and support access to child care for working parents in the Commonwealth.*

*B. In accordance with subsection C, grants in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 shall be provided to any (i) unlicensed home-based child care providers in order to support it in meeting licensure requirements and (ii) licensed home-based child care providers in order to support it in maintaining compliance with licensure requirements and enhancing the safety and quality of the child care program. Grant funds may be used for minor home improvements to the facility in which home-based child care is provided, such as improvements to fencing, stair gates, plumbing, window screens, cribs, or play equipment, purchasing age-appropriate educational materials, and other safety-related purchases relating to improving or addressing areas of common licensure violation categories, as determined by the Department.*

*C. Any home-based child care provider shall be eligible to apply for a grant under the Program. In considering applications, priority shall be given to applicants residing in communities designated as qualified opportunity zones by the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury pursuant to his delegation of authority to the Internal Revenue Service. As a condition of receiving a grant under the Program, a home-based child care provider shall be required to participate in the Virginia Quality Birth to Five (VQB5) system established pursuant to § 22.1-289.05.*

*D. Child Care Aware of Virginia shall annually collect and make publicly available data on the number of home-based child care providers that are supported under the Program as a whole and disaggregated by region and licensure status at the time of the grant award.*

**2. That the provisions of this act shall expire on July 1, 2029.**

INTRODUCED

HB259