

# HOUSE BILL 608

F5

1lr2273

---

By: **Delegate Solomon**

Introduced and read first time: January 20, 2021

Assigned to: Ways and Means and Appropriations

---

## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Early Childhood Education – Child Care Provider Support Grant Program**  
3 **(The Child Care Provider Support Act)**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Child Care Provider Support Grant Program;  
5 establishing the purpose of the Grant Program; requiring the Department of  
6 Commerce, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to implement  
7 and administer the Grant Program and, in consultation with certain industry  
8 leaders or advisory groups, to adopt certain regulations; authorizing the Secretary of  
9 Commerce to adjust the amount of a grant award under certain circumstances;  
10 prohibiting the Secretary of Commerce from awarding a grant that is greater than a  
11 certain amount; requiring the Secretary of Commerce to prioritize grant awards to  
12 eligible grantees located in certain zip codes; restricting the use of grant awards to  
13 certain purposes; requiring the Governor to include in the annual budget bill a  
14 certain appropriation for the Grant Program for each fiscal year; defining certain  
15 terms; and generally relating to the Child Care Provider Support Grant Program.

16 BY adding to  
17 Article – Education  
18 Section 9.5–421  
19 Annotated Code of Maryland  
20 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

21 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
22 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

23 **Article – Education**

24 **9.5–421.**

25 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 INDICATED.

2 (2) "ELIGIBLE GRANTEE" MEANS A CHILD CARE CENTER THAT:

3 (I) WAS IN OPERATION BEFORE MARCH 2020;

4 (II) IS OPEN AND OPERATIONAL ON OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 30,  
5 2020;

6 (III) HAS A CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING IN THE STATE;

7 (IV) IS ENROLLED IN THE MARYLAND EXCELS PROGRAM;

8 (V) ACCEPTS STATE SCHOLARSHIP VOUCHERS;

9 (VI) CAN DEMONSTRATE FINANCIAL STRESS OR A DISRUPTION  
10 IN OPERATION, INCLUDING THE LOSS OF AT LEAST 20% OF ENROLLMENT FOR A  
11 PERIOD OF AT LEAST 2 MONTHS FROM MARCH 1, 2020, THROUGH JUNE 30, 2021;

12 (VII) IS NOT CURRENTLY SERVING ENROLLED CHILDREN BUT  
13 CAN CONFIRM ITS INTENTION TO ENROLL CHILDREN NOT MORE THAN 30 DAYS  
14 AFTER THE DATE ON WHICH A GRANT IS RECEIVED; AND

15 (VIII) PROVIDES A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF HOW IT  
16 ANTICIPATES SPENDING THE GRANT AND HOW MANY CHILDREN IT ANTICIPATES  
17 ENROLLING AFTER THE GRANT IS RECEIVED.

18 (3) "GRANT PROGRAM" MEANS THE CHILD CARE PROVIDER  
19 SUPPORT GRANT PROGRAM.

20 (B) (1) THERE IS A CHILD CARE PROVIDER SUPPORT GRANT PROGRAM.

21 (2) THE PURPOSE OF THE GRANT PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE FUNDS  
22 TO ELIGIBLE GRANTEES TO HELP SUPPORT THE OPERATION OF CHILD CARE  
23 CENTERS.

24 (C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE  
25 DEPARTMENT, SHALL:

26 (I) IMPLEMENT AND ADMINISTER THE GRANT PROGRAM; AND

27 (II) IN CONSULTATION WITH CHILD CARE INDUSTRY LEADERS  
28 OR ADVISORY GROUPS, ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION,

1 INCLUDING REGULATIONS TO DEVELOP:

2 1. REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS; AND

3 2. A PROCESS FOR REVIEWING GRANT APPLICATIONS  
4 AND AWARDING GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE GRANTEEES.

5 (2) THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE:

6 (I) MAY ADJUST THE AMOUNT OF EACH GRANT DEPENDING ON  
7 THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE GRANTEEES;

8 (II) MAY NOT AWARD A GRANT TO AN ELIGIBLE GRANTEE IN AN  
9 AMOUNT THAT IS MORE THAN THE ELIGIBLE GRANTEE'S TOTAL OPERATING  
10 EXPENSES OVER A PERIOD OF 2 MONTHS; AND

11 (III) SHALL PRIORITIZE GRANT AWARDS TO ELIGIBLE GRANTEEES  
12 LOCATED IN:

13 1. HIGH POVERTY ZIP CODES IN THE STATE; OR

14 2. ZIP CODES WITH A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF  
15 LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS THAT HAVE CLOSED PERMANENTLY.

16 (D) GRANT AWARDS MAY BE USED BY ELIGIBLE GRANTEEES ONLY FOR THE  
17 FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

18 (1) PAYROLL EXPENSES;

19 (2) RENT OR MORTGAGE PAYMENTS;

20 (3) UTILITY EXPENSES; AND

21 (4) OTHER SIMILAR EXPENSES NECESSARY FOR THE OPERATION OF  
22 THE CHILD CARE CENTER.

23 (E) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE  
24 GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF  
25 \$25,000,000 FOR THE GRANT PROGRAM.

26 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
27 1, 2021.