

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025**

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**SENATE BILL 281**

Short Title:    Essential Relief for Child Care Act. (Public)

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Sponsors:     Senators Chitlik, Robinson, and Bradley (Primary Sponsors).

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Referred to:   Rules and Operations of the Senate

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March 17, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO CONTINUE FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE STABILIZATION GRANTS.

Whereas, accessible child care is essential for the continued growth of North Carolina's economy; and

Whereas, there is bipartisan consensus that child care must be a focus of the 2025-2027 legislative biennium; and

Whereas, one in five employers cite child care issues as a barrier to hiring; and

Whereas, the cost of operating a child care facility continues to rise even as parents' ability to afford it declines; and

Whereas, child care providers and the families they serve have not recovered from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, the failure to continue to provide for child care stabilization grants will lead to the closure of an estimated 20% of all child care facilities in our State within the next year; and

Whereas, we affirm that State investment in our child care providers is an investment in the economic development of current and future generations; Now, therefore, The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education (Division), the sum of fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2024-2025 fiscal year to continue the compensation grants portion of the child care stabilization grants. The Division shall continue the compensation grants portion of the child care stabilization grants through the fourth quarter at the current 2024-2025 fiscal year level.

**SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.

