

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2367

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 19, 2018
Labor & Commerce, February 22, 2018

Title: An act relating to establishing a child care collaborative task force.

Brief Description: Establishing a child care collaborative task force.

Sponsors: House Committee on Early Learning & Human Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Reeves, Slatter, Tharinger, Robinson, Kagi, Dolan, Kilduff, Chapman, Doglio, Riccelli and Stonier).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/09/18, 69-29.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/19/18 [w/oRec-LBRC].
Labor & Commerce: 2/21/18, 2/22/18 [DP-WM, DNP, w/oRec].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Department of Commerce (Commerce) to convene and facilitate a Child Care Collaborative Task Force (Task Force) to examine the effects of child care affordability and accessibility on the workforce and on businesses.
- Requires the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations on certain topics by November 1, 2019.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That it be referred without recommendation and be referred to Committee on Labor & Commerce.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Rolfes, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking Member; Billig, Hunt, Mullet, Padden, Pedersen and Rivers.

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & COMMERCE

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Chair; Hasegawa, Vice Chair; Conway, Kuderer and Saldaña.

Minority Report: Do not pass.
Signed by Senator Wilson.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.
Signed by Senator King.

Staff: Richard Rodger (786-7461)

Background: Commerce. Commerce is charged with advising the Governor and the Legislature on community and economic development matters. It administers a variety of programs including the early learning facilities grant and loan program and provides staff support to certain boards, councils, and work groups.

Child Care Licensing. The Department of Early Learning (DEL) currently oversees child care licensing, which will be transferred to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families on July 1, 2018. DEL licenses more than 6000 family home providers and child care center programs in the state.

Child Care Workforce Development Technical Work Group (Work Group). Last year's operating budget created the Work Group to develop recommendations to support increased child care workforce wages, reduce turnover, enable child care providers to recruit more qualified educators, and maintain the diversity of the current workforce. The Work Group must issue a report with recommendations and an implementation plan by December 1, 2018.

Infant at Work Programs. Some workplaces have implemented programs that allow employees to bring infants to the workplace under certain conditions. For example, the Department of Health (DOH) implemented an Infant at Work Program in 2015. Upon approval by DOH, an employee who is a new mother, father, or legal guardian may bring his or her infant between the ages of six weeks and six months to the work place. The employee must take the infant home if the infant is sick, disruptive for a prolonged period of time, causes a distraction in the workplace, or prevents the parent from accomplishing work.

Summary of Bill: Commerce must convene and facilitate the Task Force to examine the effects of child care affordability and accessibility on the workforce and on businesses. The first meeting must be held by September 1, 2018.

The Task Force includes certain voting members appointed by the Governor. It also includes a number of nonvoting members including four legislative members, agency representatives, and members appointed by the Governor. Commerce may also invite additional representatives to participate as nonvoting members.

The Task Force must develop policies and recommendations to incentivize employer-supported child care and improve child care access and affordability for employees. The Task Force must evaluate current available data including, but not limited to:

- child care market rate survey reports, including data related to the geographic distribution of licensed child care providers and the demand for, cost, and availability of such providers;
- best practices for employer-supported child care; and
- research related to the economic and workforce impacts of employee access to high quality, affordable child care.

The Task Force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature, by November 1, 2019. The report must include:

- options for the state to incentivize the provision of employer-supported child care and back-up child care by public and private employers;
- opportunities for streamlining permitting and licensing requirements to facilitate the development and construction of child care facilities;
- potential tax incentives for private businesses providing employer-supported child care;
- a model policy for the establishment of a "bring your infant to work" program for public and private sector employees; and
- policy recommendations that address racial, ethnic, and geographic disparity and disproportionality in service delivery and accessibility to services for families.

Back-up child care means a temporary child care arrangement that is provided when normal child care arrangements are unavailable.

Employer-supported child care includes:

- licensed child care centers operated at or near the workplace by an employer for the benefit of employees; or
- financial assistance provided by an employer for licensed child care expenses incurred by an employee.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: Yes.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Labor & Commerce): PRO: Forty percent of today's children do not have access to quality child care. Many people spend more on their child care than their combined mortgage and car payments. We are focusing on how we can engage the private sector to help come to solutions to providing greater access to affordable, quality child care. The bill brings together many stakeholders to discuss these issues. The stakeholder group is weighed towards businesses, with seven of the 12 voting members being representatives of business. The child care crisis is the same for students who have children as it is for all other parents. An increasing number of students in higher education are parents too.

Persons Testifying (Labor & Commerce): PRO: Representative Kristine Reeves, Prime Sponsor; Salvador Salazar Cano, Olympia Advocate for the University of Washington Bothell; Adán Espino Jr, University of Washington Tacoma.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Labor & Commerce): No one.