
**Human Services & Early Learning
Committee**

HB 1392

Brief Description: Establishing the cost of child care regulations work group.

Sponsors: Representatives Dent, Senn, Griffey, McCaslin, Frame, Chandler, Kilduff, Lovick, Appleton, Eslick and Reeves.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the Cost of Child Care Regulations work group.

Hearing Date: 1/23/19

Staff: Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

Background:

Child Care Licensing Standards.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) regulates child care licensing and is responsible for maintaining a set of core competencies for child care and early learning providers. The 2015 Legislature required the DCYF to adopt rules to implement a single set of licensing standards. The revised licensing standards must provide minimum health and safety standards for childcare and preschool programs, rely on the standards established in the Early Achievers (EA) program to address quality issues, take into account the separate needs of family care providers and child care centers, and promote the continued safety of childcare settings. The DCYF adopted the updated licensing standards in rule in 2018, including new continuing and higher education requirements for providers.

Small Business Impacts Statements.

The Regulatory Fairness Act requires an agency to develop a small business economic impact statement if a rule it is adopting will impose more than minor costs on businesses in an industry. If the small business economic impact statement shows that a rule will have a disproportionate

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impact on small businesses, the agency must, where legal and feasible, reduce the costs imposed by the rule on small businesses.

Early Achievers.

The EA is Washington's Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care and early learning. The DCYF administers the program. The quality of care is assigned a rating on a scale of 1-5, with Level 1 being the minimum requirements for licensing, and Level 5 being the highest possible level of quality. Participation in EA is mandatory for all providers serving non-school-age children and accepting state subsidy payments.

Joint Select Committee on the Early Achievers Program.

The Legislature established the Joint Select Committee on the EA Program (Committee) to review the demand and availability of various types of child care and early learning programs and make recommendations related to the EA program.

In January 2019, the Committee adopted recommendations, including a recommendation to create a legislative and stakeholder work group to weigh the costs and benefits of child care regulations and EA requirements.

Summary of Bill:

The Cost of Child Care Regulations Work Group (Work Group) is established to study:

- financial impacts of licensing regulations on child care businesses; and
- direct and indirect costs and benefits to child care providers that are associated with participation in the EA program.

The study must include an analysis of costs associated with licensing and EA requirements that may have a disproportionate economic impact on child care businesses located in rural areas.

The Secretary of the DCYF must convene the first Work Group meeting by July 1, 2019, and the DCYF must provide staff support to the Work Group. The Work Group must meet at least five times by November 30, 2019, and must convene at least two of the five meetings in eastern Washington.

Work Group membership consists of the following 12 members:

- Three licensed family home child care providers selected by a statewide organization representing the interests of family child care providers. At least one of these providers must provide care for children of agricultural workers, speak Spanish as a first language, or be located in eastern Washington.
- Three licensed child care center providers selected by a statewide organization representing the interests of licensed child care centers. At least one of these providers must provide care for children of agricultural workers, speak Spanish as a first language, or be located in eastern Washington.
- Two foster parents selected by a statewide organization solely focused on supporting foster parents. At least one foster parent must reside in eastern Washington.
- Four legislators, consisting of two members of the House of Representatives representing each of the two largest caucuses in the House, and two Senators representing each of the two largest caucuses in the Senate.

The Work Group must elect one legislator and one citizen member to serve as co-chairs.

The Work Group may seek input and collaborate with other parties, including contracting with additional persons with technical expertise if such expertise is necessary. The Work Group may only enter into such a contract if funding is appropriated for this specific purpose.

The Work Group must submit findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by December 31, 2019, and expires January 10, 2020.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.