

SENATE BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1213

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, March 24, 2021

Title: An act relating to expanding accessible, affordable child care and early childhood development programs.

Brief Description: Expanding accessible, affordable child care and early childhood development programs.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Senn, Chopp, Ramos, Bateman, Sells, Shewmake, Lekanoff, Peterson, Stonier, Duerr, Fitzgibbon, Berry, Rule, Davis, Wicks, Fey, Callan, Dolan, Frame, Lovick, Chapman, Ryu, Santos, Thai, Ortiz-Self, Orwall, Simmons, Slatter, Gregerson, Bergquist, Hackney, Valdez, Ramel, Riccelli, Macri, Goodman and Harris-Talley).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/9/21, 58-38.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/22/21, 3/24/21 [DPA-WM, DNP].

Brief Summary of Amended Bill

- Establishes a new account for child care and early learning purposes and includes a non-exhaustive list of spending goals and strategies.
- Expands eligibility and decreases co-payments in the Working Connections Child Care Program and expands eligibility in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program.
- Provides increased rates, training, grants, supports, and services for child care and early learning providers.
- Increases prenatal-to-three supports for providers and families.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

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

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.
Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair, K-12; Wilson, C., Vice Chair, Early Learning; Hunt, Mullet and Pedersen.

Minority Report: Do not pass.
Signed by Senators Hawkins, Ranking Member; Dozier and McCune.

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Early Learning Advisory Council. The Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) advises the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) on statewide early learning issues. ELAC includes representatives of state agencies, the Legislature, and certain stakeholders.

Working Connections Child Care. This federally and state-funded program provides child care subsidies to families. To not exceed the appropriated amount, DCYF must manage the program with certain priorities, so the average monthly caseload does not exceed 33,000 households.

Eligibility and Co-payments. Families may be eligible for child care subsidies if they have an income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL)—\$43,440 for a family of three—and have one or more children younger than 13 or younger than 19 with a verified special need or are under court supervision. The state pays part of the cost of child care when a parent is employed, self-employed, or in approved work or education activities, except in certain circumstances.

The family is responsible for making a co-payment to the child care provider based on the family's countable income. Under DCYF rule, co-payments are calculated as follows:

If a consumer's income is	Then the consumer's co-payment is
at or below 82 percent of FPL	\$15
above 82 percent of FPL up to 137.5 percent of FPL	\$65
above 137.5 percent of FPL through 200 of FPL	The dollar amount is equal to subtracting 137.5 percent of FPL from countable income, multiplying by 50 percent, then adding \$65.

Student Parents. DCYF may not require an applicant or consumer to meet work requirements as a condition of receiving Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) benefits when the applicant or consumer is:

- a single parent;
- a full-time student of a community, technical, or tribal college; and
- pursuing vocational education that leads to a degree or certificate in a specific

occupation, not to result in a bachelor's or advanced degree.

Child Care Subsidy Rates. The 2020 supplemental budget included appropriations to increase child care subsidy rates to 65th percentile of market at Level 2 in Early Achievers, the state's quality rating and improvement system, for fiscal year 2021. Subsidy rates are based on a market rate survey that is conducted every three years.

Child Care Collaborative Task Force. This task force was directed to develop a child care estimate model to determine the full costs providers would incur when providing high quality child care. The task force began developing the model but was unable to collect financial information from providers as originally planned due to COVID-19.

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. This voluntary preschool program administered by DCYF serves eligible three to five-year-old children who are not age-eligible for kindergarten. The program must offer a comprehensive program that includes education, health, and family support services.

Entitlement. Current law provides for Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) to become an entitlement in the 2022-23 school year for eligible children. "Eligible child" means a child who:

- has a family income at or below 110 percent of FPL, which is \$24,156 for a family of three;
- is eligible for special education preschool due to disability; and
- may include children who are eligible under rules adopted by DCYF if the number of such children equals not more than 10 percent of the total enrollment.

Expanded Enrollment. DCYF rules allow children who do not meet the definition of eligible child to enroll in ECEAP, as space is available, if the family income is:

- above 110 percent of FPL but less than 130 percent of FPL; or
- above 130 percent of FPL but less than 200 percent of FPL if the child meets at least one of the specified risk factors.

Early Entry. DCYF rules allow children to enroll in ECEAP, as space is available, when the child is not eligible under RCW 43.216.505 and the child turns three at any time during the school year when the child has a family income at or below 200 percent of FPL or meets at least one risk factor and has received services from or participated in:

- the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program;
- the Early Head Start or a successor federal program; or
- Birth-to-Three ECEAP.

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers. Part C of the federal with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers, birth to age three, who have disabilities, which includes developmental delays and diagnosed physical or mental conditions. DCYF is the lead agency for the state's ESIT

program.

Birth-to-Three Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. In 2019, DCYF was directed to develop a plan for phased implementation of a Birth-to-Three ECEAP pilot project for eligible children under 36 months old. To be eligible, a child's family income must be at or below 130 percent of FPL. The pilot project must be delivered through child care providers.

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation. In 2019, DCYF was directed to enter into a contractual agreement to hire one qualified mental health consultant for each of the six department-designated regions. The consultants must support Early Achievers coaches and child care providers by providing resources, information, and guidance regarding challenging behavior and expulsions.

Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Services Program. DCYF administers the Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Services (ECLIPSE) program, which is delivered by two community-based programs. The programs provide therapeutic child care and other specialized treatment services to families and children who have had exposure to complex trauma.

Education and Training Requirements. Under DCYF rules, new staffing qualifications for licensed child care providers went into effect in 2019. The rules require certain certificates or equivalents. By July 1, 2021, DCYF must implement a noncredit-bearing, community-based training pathway for licensed child care providers to meet professional education requirements associated with child care licensure.

Negotiated Rule Making. Agencies are encouraged to develop and use new procedures for reaching agreement among interested parties, including negotiated rule making, before proposing rules. DCYF must engage in negotiated rulemaking with the exclusive representative of the family child care licensees and with other affected interests.

Income Measures. Federal poverty guidelines are used to determine financial eligibility for certain programs. For a family of three, the 2021 poverty guideline is \$21,960.

In the National School Lunch Program, students whose families have income at or below 130 percent of FPL are eligible for free meals. Students whose families have income between 130 percent and 185 percent of FPL are eligible for reduced-price meals.

The Washington State Department of Social and Health services publishes a state median income (SMI) chart. For a family a three, the 2021 SMI is \$86,340.

For a family of three, 36 percent of SMI converts to 142 percent of FPL, and 50 percent of SMI converts to 197 percent of FPL.

Legislative Balanced Budget Requirement. The Legislature must adopt a four-year balanced budget as follows:

- the Legislature must enact a balanced omnibus operating appropriations bill that leaves, in total, a positive ending fund balance in the general fund and related funds; and
- the projected maintenance level of the omnibus appropriations bill enacted by the Legislature shall not exceed the available fiscal resources for the next ensuing fiscal biennium.

Related funds means the Washington Opportunity Pathways Account, the Workforce Education Investment Account, and the Education Legacy Trust Account. The Education Legacy Trust Account may be used only for support of common schools, and for expanding access to higher education through funding for new enrollments and financial aid, and other educational improvement efforts. During the last three biennia, the account supported early learning programs.

Summary of Amended Bill: Accounts, Spending Goals and Strategies, and Oversight.

The Fair Start for Kids Account is created, and expenditures from the account may be used only for child care and early learning purposes. A non-exhaustive list of spending goals and strategies for the account is specified.

The Fair Start for Kids Account is added to the definition of related funds, which includes it in the legislative balanced budget requirement.

The Education Legacy Trust Account is amended to include early learning and child care programs as an allowable expenditure.

Early Learning Advisory Council. ELAC must:

- assist in policy development and implementation with the overall goal of promoting school readiness for all children;
- provide annual recommendations, beginning August 31, 2022, regarding the phased implementation of strategies and priorities;
- maintain a focus on racial equity and inclusion in order to dismantle systemic racism at its core and contribute to statewide efforts to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty;
- maintain a focus on inclusionary practices for children with disabilities;
- partner with nonprofit organizations to collect and analyze data and measure progress; and
- assist DCYF in monitoring and ensuring that the investments support certain policy objectives.

In collaboration with ELAC, DCYF must consult its advisory groups and stakeholders and submit a biennial report describing how the investments have impacted the policy objectives. The first report is due September 15, 2023.

ELAC must convene a temporary licensing subcommittee to provide feedback and recommendations to DCYF on improvement to the statewide licensing process. The subcommittee must:

- examine strategies to increase the number of licensed child care providers;
- develop model policies for licensed child care providers to implement licensing standards;
- develop recommendations regarding incentives and financial supports to help prospective providers; and
- provide feedback and recommendations by December 1, 2022.

Certain representatives are added to ELAC, and appointment authority is modified. ELAC may convene advisory groups, such as a parent caucus, to evaluate specific issues.

Working Connections Child Care. Eligibility and Co-payment. Beginning July 1, 2021, a family is eligible for WCCC when the household's annual income is at or below 60 percent of SMI adjusted for family size and the household meets other eligibility requirements. Subject to appropriations, a family is eligible when the household's annual income is above 60 percent of SMI and is at or below 75 percent beginning July 1, 2027.

DCYF must calculate a monthly co-payment according to a phased-in schedule:

Date:	If the household's income is	Then the household's co-payment is
No later than July 1, 2021	at or below 20 percent of SMI	\$15 or waived to the extent allowable under federal law
No later than July 1, 2021	above 20 percent and at or below 36 percent of SMI	\$65
No later than July 1, 2021	above 36 percent and at or below 50 percent of SMI	\$115
No later than July 1, 2021, and until June 30, 2023	above 50 percent and at or below 60 percent of SMI	\$115
Beginning July 1, 2023	above 50 percent and at or below 60 percent of SMI	\$165
Beginning July 1, 2027	above 60 percent and at or below 75 percent of SMI	\$215

The department must adopt rules to implement this section, including an income phase-out eligibility period.

Student Parents. Beginning September 1, 2021 and subject to appropriations, DCYF may not require an applicant or consumer to meet work requirements as a condition of receiving WCCC when any parent, not only single parents, is a full-time student of a community,

technical, or tribal college, is in good standing, and is enrolled in:

- a vocational education program that leads to degree or certificate in a specific occupation;
- an associate degree program; or
- a registered apprenticeship program.

The requirement that a student must maintain passing grades is removed.

Subject to appropriations, DCYF may waive work requirements for full-time students who are enrolled in a bachelor's degree or applied baccalaureate degree program.

Child Care Subsidy Rates. Beginning July 1, 2021, child care subsidy base rates must achieve the 85th percentile of market for licensed or certified child care providers. The state and the exclusive representative for family child care providers must enter into bargaining over the implementation of this subsidy rate increase.

DCYF must build upon the work of the Child Care Collaborative Task Force to develop and implement a child care cost estimate model and use the completed model to recommend subsidy rates that are sufficient to compensate for the full costs of providing high quality child care. DCYF must:

- consider adjusting rates to reflect cost of living based on certain measures;
- consider incorporating the rate model for nonstandard child care; and
- evaluate options to support access to affordable health care insurance coverage for licensed or certified child care providers.

Nonstandard Hours Rate Model. By January 1, 2022 and subject to appropriations, DCYF must develop and submit a rate model for nonstandard child care hours.

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. *Entitlement.* The entitlement for ECEAP is delayed to the 2026-27 school year. Entitlement is voluntary enrollment. Beginning July 1, 2026, the definition of "eligible child" for the purposes of the future entitlement is expanded to include a child who:

- has a family with financial need;
- is experiencing homelessness;
- has participated in Early Head Start or a successor federal program, ESIT or received class C developmental services, Birth-to-Three ECEAP, or Early Childhood Intervention and Prevention Services Program (ECLIPSE); or
- is Indian as defined in DCYF rule and is at or below 100 percent of SMI.

"Family with financial need" means families with incomes at or below 36 percent of SMI adjusted for family size until the 2030-31 school year. Beginning in the 2030-31 school year, it means families with incomes at or below 50 percent of SMI.

Expanded Enrollment. DCYF must adopt rules that allow children to enroll in ECEAP

when the child is not eligible under RCW 43.216.505, as space is available, if the family income level is above 36 percent of SMI, but at or below 50 percent of SMI; and the child meets at least one of the specified risk factors.

Expanded enrollment ends August 1, 2030.

Early Entry. Early entry is expanded to allow for children who have a family income at or below 100 percent of SMI, instead of 200 percent FPL, and have participated in certain early intervention programs including children who have participated in ECLIPSE.

Rates. For the 2021-22 school year, ECEAP rates must be set at a level at least 10 percent higher than the rates established in the 2019-21 operating budget. It is the intent of the Legislature that rate increases be informed by DCYF's 2020 ECEAP rate study.

Providers Supports. *Complex Needs Funds.* Subject to appropriations, DCYF must administer two complex needs funds to promote inclusive, least restrictive environments and to support contractors and providers serving children who have developmental delays, disabilities, behavioral needs, or other unique needs. One fund must support ECEAP and Birth-to-Three ECEAP, and one fund must support child care programs.

Trauma-Informed Care Supports. Beginning July 1, 2022, DCYF must provide supports to aid eligible providers in providing trauma-informed care. Supports may be used by eligible providers for certain purposes including, wage increases for specialty credentials, professional development and training, screening tools and assessment materials, supportive services, and other related expenses.

Dual Language Rate Enhancement. Beginning July 1, 2022, DCYF must establish a dual language designation and provide subsidy rate enhancements or site-specific grants for licensed or certified child care providers, and ECEAP or Birth-to-Three ECEAP contractors.

Equity Grants. Subject to appropriations, DCYF must distribute early childhood equity grants to eligible applicants who may receive a grant once every two years. DCYF must administer the grants to support inclusive and culturally and linguistically specific programs. DCYF must conduct an equitable process to prioritize grant applications.

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation. Subject to appropriations, DCYF must administer or contract for these consultation services. Beginning July 1, 2021 and subject to appropriations, DCYF must have or contract for one coordinator and must enter into a contract with an organization providing Early Achievers coaching services to hire at least 12 consultants with at least one for each of six designated regions and the consultants placed in regions based on the highest need.

Play and Learn Groups. Subject to appropriations, DCYF must provide or contract to

provide resources and supports for inclusive and culturally and linguistically relevant play and learn groups.

Professional Development. Subject to appropriations, DCYF must provide professional development supports to aid eligible providers in reaching the professional education and training standards adopted by DCYF. Professional development supports may include trainings, Early Achievers scholarships, community-based training pathways, and other activities.

Negotiated Rulemaking with Child Care Centers. DCYF must engage in negotiated rule making with the largest organization representing child care center owners and directors; the largest organization representing supervisors, teachers, and aides; and other affected interests before adopting requirements that affect child care center licensees.

Capacity Flexibility for Family Home Providers. DCYF may waive the limit that restricts family home providers from serving not more than 12 children. DCYF must establish conditions for such waivers by rule and must assess, at a minimum, the providers' available square footage and staffing capabilities prior to issuing any waiver of the limit of 12 children.

Prenatal-to-Three Supports. *Education and Support.* Subject to appropriations, DCYF must administer a prenatal-to-three family engagement strategy. Services and supports may include home visiting, play and learn groups, parent peer-support groups, and other programs and services.

Birth-to-Three Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. The Birth-to-Three ECEAP pilot project is made permanent and subject to appropriations. To be eligible for the program, the family's income must be at or below 50 percent of SMI.

Infant Care Rate Enhancement. Beginning July 1, 2022, DCYF must provide an infant rate enhancement for licensed or certified child care providers and Birth-to-Three ECEAP contractors that are caring for a child between the ages of birth and 11 months.

Early Therapeutic and Preventative Services. Subject to appropriations, DCYF must administer early therapeutic and preventative services programs, such as ECLIPSE, and other related services for children who are between the age of birth to five; and referred by certain people due to risk of child abuse or neglect, exposure to complex trauma, or significant developmental delays.

Subject to appropriations, DCYF must make all reasonable efforts to deliver ECLIPSE statewide. These services must focus first on children and families furthest from opportunity as defined by income and be delivered by programs that emphasize racial equity.

Inflationary Adjustments. Beginning July 1, 2023 and subject to appropriations, rates paid for ECEAP, dual language enhancement, Birth-to-Three ECEAP, and infant rate enhancement must be adjusted every two years according to an inflationary increase.

Collective Bargaining. Nothing in this act changes DCYF's responsibility to collectively bargain over mandatory subjects or limits the Legislature's authority to make programmatic modifications to licensed child care and early learning programs consistent with legislative reservation of rights. The spending goals and strategies section and child care subsidy rates section do not interfere with, impede, or in any way diminish the right of family child care providers to bargain collectively with the state through the exclusive bargaining representatives.

Employer-Supported Child Care. Subject to appropriations, the Department of Commerce, in collaboration with DCYF, must provide or contract to provide remote or in-person technical assistance to employers interested in supporting their employees' access to high quality child care.

Conforming amendments are made. A statute that appears twice in the code is merged. A federal severability clause is included.

EFFECT OF EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE AMENDMENT(S):

Intent

- Recognizes that quality child care can be a stabilizing factor for children experiencing homelessness and is a proven protective factor against the impacts of trauma they may experience. Access to child care is also a necessary support for families with young children in resolving homelessness and securing employment.
- Adds references to additional federal funding through the coronavirus response and relief supplemental appropriations act and the American rescue plan act to ensure access to affordable child care and stabilize and support child care providers from the effects of COVID-19. Intends to use the additional federal funding to supplement state funding to accelerate these investments.

Accounts and Spending Goals and Strategies

- Moves the nonexhaustive list of allowable uses for the Fair Start for Kids Account to a new spending goals and strategies section.
- Adds supporting youth development programs serving children and youth ages birth through 12 to the spending goals and strategies section.
- Adds providing child care subsidies for families working to resolve homelessness to the spending goals and strategies section.
- Adds the Fair Start for Kids Account to the definition of related funds, which includes it in the legislative balanced budget requirement.
- Amends the education legacy trust account to allow expenditures for early learning

and child care programs effective immediately.

Early Learning Advisory Council

- Removes the requirement that the Governor appoint certain ELAC members.
- Provides that certain entities appoint their own representative and identifies the appointment authority.
- States that ELAC consists of members essential to coordinating services statewide prenatal through age 12 instead of 5.
- Removes a reference to recognizing that system capacity must be developed and revenue expanded as it relates to annual recommendations regarding phased implementation of strategies and priorities.
- Directs ELAC to convene a temporary licensing subcommittee to provide feedback and recommendations to DCYF by December 1, 2022, on the following:
 1. improvement to the statewide licensing process;
 2. strategies to increase the number of licensed child care providers;
 3. model policies for licensed child care providers, including a licensing guidebook; and
 4. incentives and financial supports to help prospective providers navigate the licensing process.
- Removes an annual report on general findings and recommendations and retains other reports.

Working Connections Child Care

- Removes 13-year olds and 19-year olds with verified special needs or under court supervision from WCCC eligibility.
- Makes WCCC eligibility for households with annual incomes at or below 60 percent of the state median income (SMI) beginning July 1, 2021, instead of 75 percent of SMI by July 1, 2025.
- Makes WCCC eligibility for households with annual incomes at 60 to 75 percent of SMI beginning July 1, 2027, subject to appropriations, instead of 75 to 100 percent of SMI beginning July 1, 2025.
- Changes the copayment schedule to add another tier—at or below 20 percent of SMI is \$15 or waived to the extent allowable under federal law; and above 20 percent and at or below 36 percent of SMI is \$65 instead of waiving copayments for at or below 36 percent of SMI.
- Makes copayment changes effective no later than July 1, 2021, for tiers at or below 60 percent of SMI.
- Allows copayments to be capped at \$115 until June 30, 2023.
- Removes provisions regarding a copayment model for incomes above 75 percent of SMI.
- Directs DCYF to adopt rules to implement an income phase-out eligibility period.
- Makes provisions for exempting certain student parents from work requirements as a condition of receiving Working Connections Child Care benefits beginning September 1, 2021, instead of July 1, 2023.

- Requires student parents to be in good standing for this work requirement exemption.
- Increases child care subsidy base rates to the 85th percentile of market instead of 75th percentile beginning July 1, 2021.
- Requires DCYF to consider area median income and incorporate the nonstandard child care hours rate model into the child care cost estimate model

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program:

1. allows families with incomes at or below 100 percent of SMI, instead of 50 percent of SMI, and received certain early intervention services to enroll in ECEAP early as space is available;
2. adds that ECEAP early entry is subject to appropriations; and
3. increases ECEAP rates to 10 percent in the 2021-22 school year instead of phasing in increases to 10 percent in the 2023-24 school year

Provider Supports

- Changes "by" to "beginning" when referencing dates of when certain policies begin—trauma-informed care supports, dual language rate enhancement, infant and early childhood mental health consultation, and infant rate enhancement.
- Makes the following provisions subject to appropriation: complex needs funds, infant and early childhood mental health consultation, and the nonstandard hours rate model.
- Removes the requirement that DCYF work in conjunction with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to administer the complex needs funds.
- Adds outdoor nature-based care as an eligible provider for trauma-informed care supports and adds that the supports may be used by eligible providers.
- Provides infant and early childhood mental health consultants be placed in regions based on the highest need instead of DCYF collaborating with the statewide child care resources and referral network to determine where additional consultants should be sited based on factors such as the total provider numbers overlaid with indicators of highest need.
- Requires child care center directors and employees to have a program that accepts state subsidy to access professional development supports.
- Requires DCYF to engage in negotiated rule making with the largest organization representing child care center owners and directors; the largest organization representing supervisors, teachers, and aides; and other affected interests before adopting requirements that affect child care center licensees.
- Allows DCYF to waive the limit that restricts family home providers from serving not more than 12 children. Directs DCYF to establish conditions for such waivers by rule and must assess, at a minimum, the provider's available square footage and staffing capabilities prior to issuing any waiver of the limit of 12 children.

Prenatal-to-Three Supports

- Requires DCYF to adopt rules to implement infant rate enhancements.

Collective Bargaining

- Adds that the spending goals and strategies section and child care subsidy rates section do not interfere with, impede, or in any way diminish the right of family child care providers to bargain collectively with the state through the exclusive bargaining representatives.
- Adds that the state and exclusive representative for family child care providers must enter into bargaining over the implementation of child care subsidy rate increases effective July 1, 2021.
- Adds a new section providing nothing in this act changes DCYF's responsibility to collectively bargain over mandatory subjects consist with current law or limits the Legislature's authority to make programmatic modifications consistent with legislative reservation of rights under current law.

Other

- Restores the definition of school age child to mean a child who is 5 through 12 years of age instead of 13.
- Updates effective and expiration clauses to match effective dates of policies.
- Includes an emergency clause to make the sections with policies that begin July 1, 2021, effective on that date—Working Connections Child Care eligibility and copayments, child care subsidy rates, and infant and early childhood mental health consultation. Includes an emergency clause to make the education legacy trust account amendments effective immediately.

Appropriation: The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose. The bill contains a null and void clause requiring specific funding be provided in an omnibus appropriation act.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on March 11, 2021.

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

Effective Date: The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: Child care is a critical part of economic recovery in all sectors. This bill will help families access the child care they need, so they can get back to work and recover from this global pandemic. COVID-19 has immediate and long-term impacts on K-12 education and the economy given the lack of play and social-emotional learning. The current child care system is not working and COVID-19 has made that apparent. Child care spots are difficult to find, and the cost is astronomical. Some women have to decide whether to stay home because their salaries do not or barely cover the cost of child care. Decades of inadequate investment in early learning makes the investments in this bill critical and will begin to disrupt gender and racial inequities. The needs have been piling up over the years, and this session is the time to invest in this industry. New revenue is not needed. Women make up

a large share of child care workers and are essential. There is a strong need for quality, culturally and linguistically relevant child care and early learning programs. ECEAP programs are beneficial for children and their families. They help families get involved with their children's education and help provide mental health, food, and other wrap-around services. These programs have positive incomes for children especially Native American children who have been disenfranchised from educational institutions since boarding schools. Child care providers are struggling with the additional costs during COVID-19, such as personal protective equipment and low enrollment. Providers who do not speak English need interpretation services to better understand the supports that are available. The subsidy rates are so low that it does not make financial sense for providers to serve children from families who have subsidies. Subsidy rates need to move closer to the private pay rate. Family home providers should be able to seek waivers to serve more than 12 children, which will increase access. Child care providers need to be part of the decision-making. The supports in this bill will help attract and retain quality educators. Child care is in crisis, but it is a strong industry that has been able to adapt during COVID-19 and worth investing in. The demand for infant and mental health consultation is immense. This consultation is an intervention-based program that can help reduce expulsions from child care, address trauma, and provide supports to families. Early intervention is important for children with developmental disabilities and can prevent children needing special education in the K-12 system. Early learning and child care providers can promote inclusion.

CON: Focusing on dismantling racism and home visiting programs can undermine parental rights and the passing down of cultural values. Government should not be involved in private day care businesses or mandating racism and equity training. Preschool children do not need anti-bias and anti-racism training. Systemic racism is a political construct. All Americans have equal protection under the law. This bill assumes that all families want to put their children in day care and preschool programs, and it assumes that English learners, low-income families, and families of color have inferior parenting skills and need government programs. Families do not need home-visiting programs.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Tana Senn, Prime Sponsor; Nikki Hoven; Patty Liu, MomsRising; Janice Deguchi, Neighborhood House; Bruce Spilde, Educational Service District 112; Nicole Sohn, Washington Childcare Centers Association; Amy Anderson, Association of Washington Business; Emily Murphy, Children's Alliance; Sheryl Fryberg, Tulalip Tribes, Betty J Taylor Early Learning Academy; Kevin Chase, Educational Service District 105; Erin Haick, SEIU 925; Kafia Abdillahi, OneAmerica; Kate Burke, Spokane City Council; Diana Stadden, The Arc of Washington State.

CON: Sharon Hanek; Margaret Lee; Dawn Land; Linnea McCord; Val Mullen.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.