

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5545

As Passed Senate, March 3, 2025

Title: An act relating to modifying provisions regarding family home providers overseen and certified by a federal military service.

Brief Description: Modifying provisions regarding family home providers overseen and certified by a federal military service.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Riccelli, Holy, Christian, Conway, Nobles and Valdez).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/12/25, 2/18/25 [DPS].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 3/3/25, 49-0.

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Exempts family home providers located in the surrounding metropolitan area of a federal military reservation that is overseen and currently certified by a federal military service from child-care licensing by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5545 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair, K-12; Wilson, C., Vice Chair, Early Learning; Harris, Ranking Member; Cortes, Dozier, Hansen, Krishnadasan and McCune.

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

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.

Background: Child-Care Licensing. State law makes it unlawful for an agency to care for children unless the agency is licensed by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

"Agency" means any person, firm, partnership, association, corporation, or facility that provides child care and early learning services outside a child's own home, which includes family home providers.

"Family home provider" means a child-care provider who regularly provides early childhood education and early learning services for not more than 12 children at any given time in the provider's home in the family living quarters. DCYF may waive the 12 children limit if certain conditions are met.

State law provides exceptions for the term agency, which exempts these entities from child-care licensing. A program located on a federal military reservation is not an agency for the purpose of child-care licensing.

Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations. State law directs DCYF to investigate all referrals of alleged child abuse or neglect occurring in certain settings.

Summary of First Substitute Bill: Family home providers located in the surrounding metropolitan area of a federal military reservation that is overseen and currently certified by a federal military service is not an agency, which exempts this type of provider from child-care licensing by DCYF.

DCYF must investigate all referrals of alleged child abuse or neglect occurring at these family home providers.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 6, 2025.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This bill will enhance access to childcare for military families while still ensuring oversight and coordination with DCYF. Many of the providers that are just off the federal military installation are military families, and they want to serve military families. Seventeen other states have this practice of exempting these childcare providers from state licensing because they have the oversight of a federal military service.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Marcus Riccelli, Prime Sponsor; Tammie Perreault; Jake Mayson, Forward Fairchild.

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