

Weekly Legislative Update: **Early Care and Education**

Issue Team Chair: Karen Tvedt

Contact: ktvedt@lwwa.org

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Bills Needing Action This Week

Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, so please leave the "Organization" box blank. A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

To proceed, bills must be passed by the full House or Senate (depending on where the bill originated) by Tuesday, February 13. As of this date, several bills we are following have yet to be scheduled for floor vote. The bill below has passed the Senate and now is set for hearing in the House Committee. We encourage you (as an individual) to sign in PRO on the bill at least one hour prior to the scheduled hearing.

SB 5793 Relating to paid sick leave. Companion to HB 1991. Substitute bill expands the definition of "family member" to allow employees to use paid sick leave for the care of additional persons as defined. Allows an employee to use paid sick leave when employee's child's school or place of care has been closed due to a public emergency (no longer includes weather-related closures). ***Scheduled for public hearing in the House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards at 8:00 AM on Feb. 14. Scheduled for executive session in the House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards at 10:30 AM on Feb. 16.***

 **Sign in PRO here by Wed., February 14 at 7:00 AM.**

Additional Bills We Support

HB 1916 Concerning funding for the early support for the infants and toddlers program. Child is counted as receiving early intervention services if services are provided within the month. Substitute states that bill is void unless funds are provided in the budget. *Rules relieved of further consideration on Feb. 8.*

HB 1991 Relating to paid sick leave. Companion to SB 5793. Substitute expands the definition of "family member" to allow employees to use paid sick leave for the care of additional specified persons. Allows an employee to use paid sick leave when employee's child's school or place of care has been closed due to a public emergency (no longer includes weather-related closures). *Rules relieved of further consideration on Feb. 2.*

HB 1945 Streamlining and enhancing program access for persons eligible for food assistance.

Those eligible for or receiving basic food benefits also meet the income eligibility requirements for Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) and have categorical eligibility for ECEAP (state pre-K). This bill intends to reduce barriers and make it easier for families who are eligible for food assistance to access quality, affordable child care and early learning services. Substitute bill adjusts effective dates and eligibility. *Passed the House on Feb. 9.*

HB 2111 Clarifying requirements for subsidized child care. Companion to SB 5941. Technical bill that reorganizes and updates Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) statutes. ***Public hearing in Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education on Feb. 14 at 10:30 am.***

HB 2124 Supporting and expanding access to child care and early learning programs.

Participation in ECEAP, Birth-to-Three ECEAP, Head Start or Early Head Start is an approved activity when determining eligibility for Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) assistance. Substitute bill makes it easier for certified child care, Head Start and Early Head Start workers to get help paying for child care for their own children. *Referred to Rules on Feb. 5.*

HB 2195 Strengthening the early learning facilities grant and loan program by revising criteria and providing resources to the early learning facilities development account. *Referred to Rules on Feb. 5.*

HB 2322 Creating a tax preference child care requirement; legislature indicates its intention to encourage employers to assist employees with child care costs. Substitute bill calls for a study of existing employer-provided child care programs, an exploration of funding options, and recommendations about expanding access to child care including how businesses can be part of the funding solution. *Referred to Rules on Feb. 5.*

SB 5774 Increasing the capacity to conduct timely fingerprint-based background checks for prospective child care employees and other programs. To increase timeliness in processing background checks, this bill requires the department to maintain the capacity to do fingerprints in its early learning and child welfare offices for purposes of State Patrol and FBI background checks. Substitute specifies location priorities and limits staff support per office. *Passed the House unanimously on Feb. 8. Referred to House Human Services, Youth & Early Learning.*

SB 6038 Reducing costs associated with providing child care. Eliminates child care licensing fees. Extends the B&O tax exemption to include income from the care and education of children up to age 12. Substitute adds children up to age 18 with a verified special need or under court supervision. *Passed the House on Feb. 9.*

Bills We Are Watching

No bills at this time.

Bills We Oppose

No bills at this time.

How You Can Be Involved

- If you are interested in a particular bill, use the links above to go to the webpage for that bill. These pages include staff summaries and reports including who testified PRO versus CON on the bill. There is also information about how to access videos of hearings that have been held.
- Read and take action through the [LWVWA Legislative Action Newsletter](#), distributed each Sunday during the legislative session.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under consideration as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Please direct questions or comments to [Karen Tvedt](#), Early Care and Education Issue Chair.