

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

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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.

Bills with fiscal implications are unlikely to receive further action this session unless they are heard and passed by their respective fiscal committees by Feb. 5. We encourage you (as an individual) to sign in PRO on the two bills below at least one hour prior to the scheduled hearing.

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) assistance and have categorical eligibility for ECEAP (state pre-K). This bill is intended 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 delays effective dates. ***Scheduled for executive action in House Appropriations on Feb. 5 at 10:30 am.***

⚠ Sign in PRO here by Monday, February 5 at 9:30 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 providers to get help paying for child care through WCCC. ***Scheduled for executive action in House Appropriations on Feb. 5 at 10:30 am.***

⚠ Sign in PRO here by Monday, February 5 at 9:30 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. *Executive action taken in House Appropriations on Feb. 2.*

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). *Executive action taken in House Labor & Workplace Standards on Fri. Jan. 26. Rules relieved of further consideration on Feb. 2; second reading.*

HB 2101 Eliminating child care licensing fees. The Secretary, Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) may not charge fees to licensees for obtaining a child care license. *Referred to Appropriations Committee on Jan. 17.*

HB 2111 Clarifying requirements for subsidized child care. Companion to SB 5941. Clean-up of statute to reflect changes made in recent years. *Passed by the House on Jan. 29. First reading in Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education on Jan. 30.*

HB 2195 Strengthening the early learning facilities grant and loan program by revising criteria and providing resources to the early learning facilities development account. *Executive action taken in House Capital Budget on Feb. 2.*

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 roll, print or scan 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. *Executive action taken in Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education on Jan. 17; public hearing in Senate Ways & Means on Jan. 29.*

SB 6018 Early learning coordinators at ESDs. Each Educational Service District (ESD) must designate an early learning coordinator to support increased collaboration, recruitment, enrollment, and service delivery across Washington’s pre-k through third grade continuum. *Executive action taken in Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education on Jan. 25. Passed to Rules for second reading on Jan. 26. Referred to Ways & Means on Jan. 26.*

SB 6038 Reducing costs associated with providing child care. Eliminates child care licensing fees and includes a tax performance statement to extend the B&O tax exemption to include income from the care and education of children up to age 12. *Public hearing held in Senate Ways & Means on Jan. 25 at 4:00 PM.*

Bills We Are Watching

HB 2243 Creating the children's social equity land trust to deliver revenue for child care programs, with priority given to funding rural areas that lack sufficient child care (child care deserts). Requested by the Dept. of Natural Resources. Substitute bill requires the Dept. of Commerce (rather than DCYF) to manage the trust and award the child care grants. *Public hearing held in House Agriculture & Natural Resources on Jan. 19. Executive Session Jan. 31 at 8:00 AM. Referred to Capital Budget on Jan. 31.*

HB 2322 Creating a tax preference child care requirement; intends to encourage employers to assist employees with child care costs. *Executive hearing scheduled in House Finance on Feb. 5 at 8:00 AM.*

SB 6171 Ordering a study on child care for professionals with non-standard hours. Substitute bill changes the bill title and requires DCYF to conduct a feasibility study for a pilot program to award start-up grants to establish and operate non-standard hour child care programs for the children of people working in high demand professions such as firefighting and medical services in rural areas during shift and other non-standard hours. *Public hearing scheduled in Senate Human Services on Jan. 29 at 10:30 AM. Public hearing in Senate Ways & Means on Feb. 3.*

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.