

Commerce Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-408
AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SMALL BUSINESS CHILD CARE INCENTIVE
Title: PROGRAM.
Vote Date: 3/22/2022
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/15/2022
File No.:

explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Commerce Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

Childcare has been an issue for families and business since the start Covid-19 pandemic. There is a lack of childcare providers due to shutdowns from the pandemic. Many businesses had to close as a result of hardships faced during the pandemic. Now families do not have access to reliable childcare and are unable to return to work. This bill will provide families and business with the support they need to return to work and ensure they have access to childcare.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

David Lehman, Commissioner and Governor's Senior Economic Advisor, Department of Economic and Community Development & Beth Bye, Commissioner, Office of Early Childhood, State of Connecticut

Both agencies suggested language modifications to the bill. This bill only includes childcare centers. Language should be changed to include family childcare homes, group childcare homes, and childcare centers. The need for expediting state licensing processes and licensing and permitting and approval processes unwarranted. The Office of Early Childhood does not have any backlogs and applications are processed without delays. The Department of Economic and Community Development is setting up a new Small Business Express program that will connect small businesses with loan and grant lenders. It is recommended that childcare facilities use this program rather than standing up a separate loan and grant program specific to early childhood businesses.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Garrett Sheehan, President & CEO, Greater New Haven & Quinnipiac Chambers of Commerce

A small business childcare incentive program would promote the expansion of childcare centers and create new ones. This would address one of the main barriers to re-entering the workforce after the pandemic. This bill will also give childcare centers the support they need.

Ashley Zane, Government Affairs Associate, CBIA

Reliable and qualified childcare will promote a healthy labor market in the state. Many small childcare centers were forced to close during the pandemic. The childcare sector brought in \$718 million in revenue to our state before the pandemic. CBIA also supports initiatives like voucher programs to help offset childcare costs.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

David Godbout

Mr. Godbout expressed opposition to the bill due to disagreeing with the virtual procedure followed by the CGA for public hearings.

Reported by: Grace Carlos

Date: 3/31/2022