

Education Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-152
AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF
Title: EARLY CHILDHOOD.
Vote Date: 3/6/2024
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 2/21/2024
File No.: 94

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

On recommendation from the Office of Early Childhood, via the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel, this bill builds up the language and statute support of Connecticut ECE programs and aims to better the experience of both early childcare providers and parents within the Connecticut early childcare system. The proposed bill language aims to achieve better child outcomes, equitable access to childcare, and ubiquitous regulations to the Office of Early Childhood

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Office of Early Childhood, Commissioner, Beth Bye](#): expresses support for this bill and provided comments on each section. They state support for the two corrections made in Sect. 1 and Sect. 2 of the proposed bill language, which clarifies that school-age programs are exempt from postage of developmental milestone information on the premise, as well as the clarification that adds the group of families within "subsidized guardianship" to the Care 4 Kids protective services category. They also expressed support for Sect. 3, which requires the OEC Commissioner to comply with the Child Care Development Block Grant regulations in lieu of state regulations as it would allow the OEC to better implement federal policy changes. They expressed support for Sect. 4, which would require licensed childcare centers, group childcare homes, and family childcare homes to allow 'Birth to Three' professionals on-site to deliver services at the licensed setting. They emphasized that this bill would create equitable access and support of services to children by providing the necessary support and services to succeed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Middletown CT Public Schools, School Readiness Liaison, Dawn Dubay](#): expresses support for this bill stating as such it will simplify the currently disjointed early care system and strengthen Middletown's community needs through a strong governance council.

[CT Early Childhood Alliance, Executive Director, Merrill Gay](#): expresses general support for this bill.

[Family Centers ECE, Director, Catherine Hogan](#): expresses support for this bill stating it has been challenging to attract and retain qualified, talented early childcare educators due to having less flexibility in coverage and inadequate funding for staff salaries. They request support for this bill to increase funding for ECE programming.

[CT Project Action Fund, Policy & Advocacy Strategist, Coralys Santana](#): expresses support for the technical recommendations outlined in this bill.

[Friends Center for Children, Co-Chair, Allyx Schivone](#): expresses support for this bill stating it allows OEC to update the developmental milestones and continue providing support for early care apprentice programs as well as includes language to waive application requirements for at-risk families applying for childcare subsidies, which would benefit families. They express the need for support towards early childcare providers and families seeking this care and the importance of prioritizing childcare as a fundamental component of the State's infrastructure.

[Family Centers ECE Programs, Vice President, Yenny Toone](#): expresses support for this bill and request fully funding the Blue Ribbon Panel's Plan of \$143 million, allocating \$4,500 per affected child to aid families in affording additional childcare. They also request utilizing the Connecticut Early Childhood Fund to hold additional early education funds.

[American Heart Assoc. CT, Government Relations Director, Jim Williams](#): expresses support for this bill and commend all efforts to address targeted outreach, recruitment, and retention of licensed early care education (ECE) programs and pre-licensure technical assistance. They also express support for prioritizing funding to build supply in rural areas, childcare deserts, areas with a high proportion of exempt providers, and family childcare homes.

The following members from CSEA SEIU Local 2001 submitted testimony in support of this bill.

They express support for this bill, highlighting support for a funding increase to raise the subsidy income limit from 60% of the State Median Income to 65%. They state, however, that this bill is only the beginning steps in providing the support early childcare educators need in the state.

[CSEA SEIU Local 2001, Childcare Provider, Martha Torres](#)
[CSEA SEIU Local 2001, Childcare Provider, Iris Velazquez](#)

The following constituents submitted testimony in support of this bill.

They express support for this bill stating it is a beginning step in the right direction toward fixing the problems of access in the early childcare system.

[Caroline Austin](#)

[Action Early Learning Center, Head Teacher, Kerzell Barnes](#)

[Parent, Jimisah Butler](#)

[Tori Conway](#)

[Childcare Educator, Sandra Dill](#)

[Miss Dee's Family Daycare Center, Denisha Dozier](#)

[Bridgeport Prospers, Jayson-Ann Johnson](#)

[Eimy Martinez](#)

[Tiffany Morrissey](#)

[Meredith O'Keefe](#)

[CES, Teaching and Learning Specialist, Liz Parmelee](#)

[Krista Pisano](#)

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None expressed.

Reported by: Farah Suede

Date: 3/27/24