

By Mr. Cahill of Beverly, petition of Michael P. Cahill, Kevin G. Honan, Christine E. Canavan and Patricia D. Jehlen for legislation to increase the availability of child care services. Human Services and Elderly Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety-Nine.

AN ACT TO INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE FOR EVERYONE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 28A of the General Laws is hereby
2 amended by inserting at the end of section 2 the following:—
3 “Sliding fee scale”, a fee schedule to be used in determining the
4 dollar amount or portion of cost required to be paid weekly by
5 parents or guardians using a subsidy for child care services
6 administered by the office.

1 SECTION 2. Said chapter is hereby further amended by
2 inserting after section 4, subsection (m) the following:—

3 (n) Parents or legal guardians who meet State approved income
4 guidelines and other criteria established by the office shall be
5 eligible to receive child care subsidies administered by the office
6 to subsidize the costs of care for children ages birth through the
7 age of fourteen or the end of the school year within which the fif-
8 teenth birthday falls.

9 (o) The office shall publish a sliding fee scale based upon the
10 family state median income of the Commonwealth, as determined
11 by the United States Census Bureau Current Population Survey,
12 and shall update said sliding fee scale annually to reflect changes
13 in the family state median income.

1 SECTION 3. Chapter 28A of the General Laws is hereby fur-
2 ther amended by inserting after section 5A the following new
3 section:—

4 Section 5B. The office shall, on an annual basis, consistent with
5 the requirements under section 4, subsection (m) of this chapter
6 and in collaboration with other data collection efforts, collect cur-
7 rent data concerning the following features of the child care
8 system: the demographics, incomes, and service needs of families
9 awaiting child care subsidies, the need for additional capacity in
10 general and in specific regions of the Commonwealth, the need for
11 additional capacity within specific prototypes of care, the facility
12 needs of existing child care programs licensed by the office, the
13 potential for expansion among existing programs, staff education
14 and training, staff salaries, the effectiveness of resource and
15 referral services in each region and statewide, and the general
16 quality of programs providing child care, school-age care, and
17 early learning services. In collecting said data, the office shall
18 take into consideration other public and private data collection
19 efforts, and make every reasonable effort to use existing data
20 to fulfill the data collection requirement established by this
21 provision.

1 SECTION 4. The office shall use data collected under sec-
2 tion 5B as established by this Act, to establish and report to the
3 legislature by the end of the first fiscal year following the passage
4 of this Act a plan for increasing the capacity of the current child
5 care system sufficiently to serve all eligible families who wish to
6 receive subsidies by the close of the fifth fiscal year following
7 passage of this Act. The office shall use data collected in each
8 consecutive year to evaluate and report on its progress in meeting
9 the objectives of that plan, and shall by the end of
10 each fiscal year deliver said report to the Joint Committee on
11 Human Services and Elderly Affairs and the House and Senate
12 Committees on Ways and Means.

1 SECTION 5. Chapter 62 of the General Laws is hereby
2 amended in section 3, part B, paragraph (a) by inserting into
3 sub-paragraph (7) after the words “of the Code” the following
4 words:—

5 Provided that for the purposes of this provision of Massa-
6 chusetts General Law, said employment-related expenses and
7 number of dependents for which the expenses were incurred may
8 exceed those claimed under section 21 of the Code, but may not
9 exceed a total of eight thousand dollars per child or other
10 dependent.

