

HOUSE BILL 2168

By Hazlewood

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 29; Title 49 and Title 71, relative to the Tennessee Child Care Task Force.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 1, Part 11, is amended by adding the following language as a new section:

(a) There is created the Tennessee child care task force, to be administratively attached to the department of human services.

(b) The task force is created to advise and make recommendations to the general assembly on how to:

(1) Address the challenges of quality, affordability, and accessibility of child care in this state;

(2) More effectively use public resources and funding streams, including funding from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), administered by the United States department of health and human services;

(3) Build partnerships between government and the business sector, where businesses are motivated to create and participate in strategies that support child care for their employees; and

(4) Encourage mutually beneficial collaboration between the department of human services, department of labor and workforce development, department of economic and community development, and department of education in developing solutions to the state's child care challenges.

(c) The task force is composed of eleven (11) members as follows:

(1) The commissioner of human services, or the commissioner's designee;

(2) The commissioner of labor and workforce development, or the commissioner's designee;

(3) The commissioner of economic and community development, or the commissioner's designee;

(4) The commissioner of education, or the commissioner's designee;

(5) One (1) member of the senate to be appointed by the speaker of the senate;

(6) One (1) member of the house of representatives to be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(7) Three (3) representatives from businesses in this state that do not provide direct child care services to be appointed jointly by the speaker of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(8) Two (2) representatives from nonprofits with a successful record of providing high-quality child care services to be jointly appointed by the speaker of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives;

(d)

(1) Members of the task force serve without compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with the comprehensive travel regulations promulgated by the commissioner of finance and administration and approved by the attorney general and reporter.

(2) All legislative members of the task force remain members of the task force until the task force reports its findings and recommendations to the general assembly.

(3) Vacancies among the members of the task force must be filled in the same manner as in the original selection of members.

(4) The speaker of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall confer in making appointments to ensure that members of the task force are inclusive and reflect the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of the state.

(5) The commissioner of human services, or the commissioner's designee, shall call the first meeting of the task force no later than July 15, 2020, at which time the members shall elect a chair and vice chair.

(6) The task force shall meet at least quarterly. The chair may call special meetings whenever necessary for the transaction of business. The chair shall notify each member of the task force of any special meeting at least five (5) days before the time fixed for the special meeting. A majority of the members of the task force may petition the chair to call a special meeting, in which case the chair shall call a special meeting.

(e) The task force must agree upon its findings and recommendations by a majority vote of its total membership. A majority of the members of the task force constitute a quorum for the purpose of meeting and conducting business.

(f) The chair of the task force may call on appropriate state agencies for reasonable assistance in the work of the task force.

(g) The task force has the responsibility to:

(1) Hire and manage a consulting firm to assist in the development of a multi-year strategic plan for increasing the availability of high-quality, affordable, and accessible child care;

(2) Identify and articulate challenges to providing quality and affordable child care;

(3) Establish clear goals, objectives, and state-specific solutions for overcoming the challenges to providing quality and affordable child care;

(4) Assess the process for using public resources and funding streams, including the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), to support child care programs, and identify opportunities to further use these resources;

(5) Develop recommended guidelines for spending CCDF funds that ensure all funds are obligated annually and not returned to the federal government;

(6) Identify resources across state government departments that could be used more effectively to address child care challenges; and

(7) Establish an evaluation model to assess progress against the strategic plan.

(h) The task force shall submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the general assembly no later than July 1, 2021, at which time the task force will cease to exist. The final report must include:

(1) Findings and conclusions about the child care need;

(2) A summary of the strategic plan developed by the task force in collaboration with the consulting firm to address the child care need;

(3) Recommended evaluation models for the strategic plan;

(4) Reasons for previous underspending of CCDF funds and recommended guidelines for future spending of CCDF funds; and

(5) Recommendations for legislation deemed necessary to implement the strategic plan.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020, the public welfare requiring it.