



Office of the City Clerk

City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St.
Room 107
Chicago, IL 60602
www.chicityclerk.com

Legislation Text

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Committee(s) Assignment: Committee on Education and Child Development
Committee on Education and Child Development
September 6, 2017 City Council Meeting

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, parental income and economic stability is a key determinant of child outcomes; and

WHEREAS, according to the Center for American Progress, approximately 80% of Chicagoans, including 5 out of every 6 children, live in a child care desert, with more than three children under age 5 per slot in licensed centers; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2016 report from Illinois Action for Children, there are only enough licensed slots in child care centers, school age programs and family child care in Chicago to account for 26% of children ages birth to 12 with all parents working; and

WHEREAS, the Child Care Assistance Program only provides child care subsidies to an estimated 31% of children eligible to receive assistance; and

WHEREAS, according to Fiscal Year 2015 program data and 2014 census data, it is estimated that more than 100,000 children ages five and under have working parents and no access to affordable child care; and

WHEREAS, according to data from the Economic Policy Institute, the average child care worker in Illinois cannot afford child care themselves, with center-based infant care costs at more than 50% of their annual median wage; and

WHEREAS, the pipeline of qualified early childhood educators struggles to attract new teachers into the workforce and does not adequately support or reward the current workforce in attaining further professional development; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) is implementing federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) health and safety requirements in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) in a manner that is anticipated to further constrict the pool of qualified early childhood professionals and reduce access for families to affordable child care, including mandating more than 50 hours of unpaid training to be completed in 18 months;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Chicago urges Governor Rauner and the IDHS to implement federal regulations so that they do not create additional barriers and force families from the CCAP by compensating providers for attending trainings and exempting all relative providers from health and safety requirements as permitted by federal funding sources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of Chicago supports a plan to establish universal access to child care and early education programs for all families in Chicago that truly serves the needs of working parents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of Chicago commits to preserving the early childhood workforce by establishing adequate compensation benchmarks for those working in early childhood programs delivered by the Department of Family and Support Services that recognizes professional development across a career and wage ladder include living wages and parity with K-12 educators; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of Chicago commits to pursuing opportunities to strengthen the early childhood workforce through investing in professional development supports that assist workers in advancing in their career pathways, including competency-based and alternative pathways, and free, convenient coursework, and that the City Council of Chicago endorses community voice in and oversight of the City's early childhood programs. o