

Weekly Legislative Update: Early Care and Education

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This week, bills with budget implications were required to receive a “do pass” from fiscal committees, i.e., Senate Ways and Means, House Appropriations, or the House Capital Budget Committee. Several of the early care and education bills we support met the February 24 fiscal committee deadline and now must go through the Rules Committee and onto the Senate or House floor for member approval by March 8. Once a bill passes, it then goes to the opposite chamber’s policy committee and the process starts all over.

You can help this week by contacting your legislators to encourage them to help get bills out of the Rules Committee and onto the House or Senate floor for approval. You can do this by going to the bill pages on leg.wa.gov and clicking on the green “Comment on this Bill” button. This button will take you to a page that verifies your legislative district and includes a pop-up box with the names of your legislators. Step 2 asks for your contact information and Step 3 allows you to indicate your position on the bill and provide comments.

Using the process described above, **contact your Senator about [SB 5225](#) and [SB 5316](#)** asking them to help move these bills from Rules to the Senate floor and to vote in favor of these bills to address the crisis in the availability and affordability of early care and education services.

Similarly, **contact your Representatives about [HB 1525](#) and [HB 1550](#)** to move these bills from Rules to the House floor and vote in favor of these bills to address concerns about the quality and availability of early care and education services for vulnerable children and their families.

Two bills we support appear to have died for this session including [HB 1451](#) to expand the child care workforce and [HB 1511](#) regarding income calculations for certain early care and education programs. What I’m hearing is that advocates are working to get some of the provisions of these bills into the budget as provisos.

How You Can Be Involved

- If you’re interested in a particular bill, use the links above to go to the bill page. These pages include staff summaries and reports including who testified pro versus con on the bill. There is also information about how to access videos of hearings that have been held.
- Contact Karen Tvedt, ktvedt@lwvwa.org if you have questions.