

Weekly Legislative Update: **Early Care and Education**

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Bills Needing Action This Week

Remember, only authorized members can speak for the League; the Issue Chairs will do that, so please leave the "Organization" box blank. A more powerful influence is many voices speaking for themselves rather than many voices speaking for the League.

HB 1945 Streamlining and enhancing program access for persons eligible for food assistance.

Those eligible for or receiving basic food benefits also meet the income eligibility requirements for Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) and have categorical eligibility for ECEAP (state pre-K). This bill intends to reduce barriers and make it easier for families who are eligible for food assistance to access quality, affordable child care and early learning services. Substitute bill adjusts effective dates and eligibility. **Public hearing, Senate Early Learning & K-12 at 1:30 PM on Feb. 19.**

 **Sign in PRO here by Mon., February 19 at 12:30 PM.**

HB 2124 Supporting and expanding access to child care and early learning programs.

Participation in ECEAP, Birth-to-Three ECEAP, Head Start or Early Head Start is an approved activity when determining eligibility for Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) assistance. Substitute bill makes it easier for certified child care, Head Start and Early Head Start workers to get help paying for child care for their own children. **Public hearing in Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education on Feb. 19 at 1:30 PM.**

 **Sign in PRO here by Mon., February 19 at 12:30 PM.**

SB 5774 Increasing the capacity to conduct timely fingerprint-based background checks for prospective child care employees and other programs. To increase timeliness in processing background checks, this bill requires the department to maintain the capacity to do fingerprints in its early learning and child welfare offices for purposes of State Patrol and FBI background checks. Substitute specifies location priorities and limits staff support per office. **Public hearing in House Human Services, Youth & Early Learning on Feb. 20 at 1:30 pm. Executive hearing on Feb. 21 at 1:30 PM.**

 **Sign in PRO here by Tues., February 20 at 12:30 PM.**

SB 6038 Reducing costs associated with providing child care. Eliminates child care licensing fees. Extends the B&O tax exemption to include income from the care and education of children up to age 12. Substitute adds children up to age 18 with a verified special need or under court supervision. *Public hearing in the House Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning at 1:30 PM on Feb. 20. Executive session in the House Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning at 1:30 PM.*

 **Sign in PRO here** by Tues., February 20 at 12:30 PM.

Additional Bills We Support

HB 1916 Concerning funding for the early support for the infants and toddlers program. Child is counted as receiving early intervention services if services are provided within the month. Substitute bill states bill is void unless funds are provided in the budget. *Feb. 14: First reading, Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education.*

HB 2195 Strengthening the early learning facilities grant and loan program by revising criteria and providing resources to the early learning facilities development account. *Scheduled for executive session in Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education on Feb. 19 at 1:30 pm.*

HB 2111 Clarifying requirements for subsidized child care. Companion to SB 5941. Technical bill that reorganizes and updates Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) statutes. *Executive action taken in Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education on Feb. 15.*

SB 5793 Relating to paid sick leave. Substitute bill expands the definition of “family member” to allow employees to use paid sick leave for the care of additional persons as defined. Allows an employee to use paid sick leave when employee’s child’s school or place of care has been closed due to a public emergency (no longer includes weather-related closures). *Scheduled for executive session in the House Labor & Workplace Standards at 10:30 AM on Feb. 20.*

Bills We Are Watching

No bills at this time.

Bills We Oppose

No bills at this time.

How You Can Be Involved

- If you are interested in a particular bill, use the links above to go to the webpage for that bill. 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.

- Read and take action through the [LWVWA Legislative Action Newsletter](#), distributed each Sunday during the legislative session.
- You may also express your opinion on legislation with the LWVWA issue chairs. We will take your perspectives under consideration as we determine our support for legislation and prepare testimony. Please direct questions or comments to [Karen Tvedt](#), Early Care and Education Issue Chair.