



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE | JANUARY 24, 2017

We'll post the [Legislative Update and Bill Tracker](#) on the Child Care Aware of Minnesota website each Tuesday to reflect the activity through the previous Friday. You can read a brief overview of introduced bills, committee level or floor action, and other news related to **early care and education and school age care**. If you have questions or additions to recommend, please email Ann McCully at: AnnM@childcareawaremn.org.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

During the week of Jan. 16-20, committees delved deeper into the programs under their jurisdiction. Committee action, including consideration of proposed legislation, will likely pick up next week after the release of the Governor's Budget. Action included:

- The **House Education Finance** Committee received an overview of the recently institute **Voluntary Pre-K program** from the Commissioner of Education.
- The **Senate Human Services Reform Finance and Policy & The Senate E-12 Finance** Committees held a joint hearing with a **focus on "five and under"** with presentations from the Department of Education, the Minnesota's Children's Cabinet, the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services, as well as Dakota and Hennepin Counties.
- **House Subcommittee on Child Care Access and Affordability** received a presentation from the Center for Rural Policy and Development -- "A quiet crisis: Minnesota's child care shortage" and from First Children's Finance on Business Practices of Family Child Care.

GOVERNOR'S BONDING REQUESTS

Early Childhood Facilities: The Governor recommends **\$15 million** in general obligation bonds to construct and renovate early childhood facilities. The funding's purpose is to ensure families have access to early childhood programs housed in safe facilities. DHS selects projects through a RFP process and requires a 50 percent non-state match.

The Family Partnership: The Governor recommends **\$1.6 million** from the general fund for a grant to the city of Minneapolis for the Family Partnership to support predesign and design for a new facility. The Family Partnership provides mental health, early childhood education, and other services to support children and families.

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON ACCESS TO CHILD CARE REPORT RELEASED

This Task Force has met across the summer, and released its report on Jan.15, 2017. The full report is available on the [Task Force webpage](#). Here is a brief summary of the report's recommendations:

Regulatory

- Develop consistency and uniformity in regulatory enforcement; improve relationships and communication between the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), county licensors, and child care providers; and improve fairness in compliance measures.
- Ensure training is accessible, relevant, and affordable; and broaden and deepen the trainer pool.

Affordability

- Reform and invest in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).
- Determine ways to address costs for middle income families, whether through targeted funding, tax policy, or community/business investments in child care.

Long-term Discussions

- Consider the creation of an independent board for child care providers.
- Encourage more people to enter and stay in the child care provider workforce.
- Consider ways to address emergency child care assistance for families fleeing abuse.

BILL INTRODUCTIONS

For more information about each bill, please download our weekly Bill Tracker. This list includes topics and numbers for bills introduced through **Jan. 20, 2017**:

- Dependent care credit modified (**HF 64-Bernardy/SF 212-Laine**)
- Child care assistance subsidy restrictions modified (**HF 139-Knoblach**)
- Appropriating money for grants to full-service community schools (**HF 146-Davnie/ SF 7-Wiger**)
- Basic sliding fee child care programs modified, eligibility for early learning scholarship modified, system redesign provided, and money appropriated (**HF 219-Moran**)
- Establishing a Working Parents Act (**HF 239-Thissen**)
- Loan forgiveness program for individuals working in greater Minnesota established (**HF 319-Lien/SF 109-Eken**)
- Refundable student loan credit allowed (**HF 365-Applebaum/SF 165- Clausen**)
- Working family income tax credit modification (**SF 28-Rest**)
- Community education revenue program increase (**SF 204-Latz**)

UPCOMING DATES

- **Tuesday, Jan. 24**: Governor's budget released