



Legislative Update: March 15, 2016 (Activity through Friday, March 11)

Welcome to the Child Care Aware Legislative Update. This narrative update, along with our Bill Tracker, will be posted each **Tuesday** (reflecting activity through the previous Friday) on the [Child Care Aware of Minnesota website](http://www.childcareaware.org).

BILLS INTRODUCED (to date):

Early Care and Education/School-age programs and services (bills referred to Education Committees)

- Full-service community school funding increased (HF 2391)
- Pre-K children-deaf and hard of hearing Special Education services and enrollment (HF 2411/SF 2306)
- Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 pupil transportation funding provided (HF 2434)
- Minnesota Reading Corps funding increased (HF 2449/SF 2262)
- Head Start programs waiting lists funding increased (HF 2581)
- Early Learning Scholarships, home visiting programs, and Parent Aware activities increased funding and modifications (HF 2670/SF 2411)
- Community Education revenue program funding increased and minimum population guarantee increased (HF 2708/SF 2463)
- Head Start waiting lists fully funded, report required, and money appropriated (HF 2811)
- Community education youth after-school enrichment revenue increase (HF 2891/SF 2286)

Child Care Assistance/Licensing changes (bills referred to HHS committees)

- Child Care Assistance modified (HF 2402)
- Child Care Assistance subsidy restrictions modified (HF 2470/SF 2391)
- Residential day care facilities for children required to be in residence of provider (HF 2498)
- Minnesota Family Investment Program eligibility modified (HF 2524/SF 2407)
- Child Care Assistance provider payments modified (HF 2657)
- Basic sliding fee child care assistance program forecasted, and child care assistance provider reimbursement rates modified (HF 2821/SF 2562)

Children's mental health/child protection (bills referred to HHS committees)

- Children's Mental Health Collaboratives appropriation (HF 2661/SF2305)
- Legislative task force on child protection extended (HF 2683/SF 2428)

Family supports (bills referred to HHS committees)

- Office of Ombudsperson for American Indian Families created (HF 2701)

Bills from last session heard/scheduled for hearings to date:

- School readiness teachers licensing requirement; early childhood family education (ECFE) teacher license requirements clarification (SF 1386) – **Scheduled for Senate Education Committee 3/16/16**
- Human services data provisions modifications (SF 1434) – **Heard in Senate Judiciary 3/8/16; passed and moved to the Senate floor**

STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS

Governor Dayton gave Minnesota's State of the State address on **Wednesday, March 9** and once again, child care and early education was highlighted. Here are some related excerpts from his speech:

"We stopped making the investments of other states in early childhood care and education, providing all-day kindergarten over a decade behind other states, still debating voluntary pre-kindergarten, and then wondering why we haven't eliminated the Achievement Gap."

"My Supplemental Budget will again propose increasing the child care tax credit. The average cost of child care for Minnesota families is one of the highest in the nation."

"The state avoided facing and funding its growing responsibilities for child care assistance, for mental health services, and for elderly care."

"We have finally learned what many child development experts have been telling us for decades: the very first years of a child's life are deeply formative and determinative. If we don't prevent achievement gaps before they appear, or close them quickly thereafter, they will require much more difficult and more expensive remedial efforts for years following."

Increased legislative support for early childhood care and education has grown significantly over the past five years. And I thank you for that. Yet the numbers of children, who desperately need those services, continue to rise. Next week I will propose further initiatives to help provide more children with the decent life beginnings that every child deserves.

There are disagreements over how and where to best provide those services, particularly for four year-olds. Some of those disagreements are professional; others are political. Sixty-thousand Minnesota four year-olds need Minnesota's grown-ups to go beyond their big self-interests and place those little interests first."

UPCOMING DATES

Tuesday, March 15: Governor's supplemental budget is released

Friday, March 25 - Tuesday, March 29 at noon: Legislative Recess

Friday, April 22 - Monday, April 25 at 8:00 a.m.: Legislative Recess

Monday, May 23: By law, legislators must adjourn this session

COMMITTEE DEADLINES

Friday, April 1: Committees must act favorably on bills in the house of origin

Friday, April 8: Committees must act favorably on bills, or companion bills, that met the first deadline in the other house

Thursday, April 21: Committees must act favorably on major appropriation and finance bills