

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2373

Title: An act relating to creating the office of child care and early education.

Brief Description: Creating the office of child care and early education.

Sponsors: Representatives Kagi, D. Sommers, Tokuda, Cody, Edwards, Kenney, Murray, Wolfe, Ogden, Morris, Stensen, Veloria, Schual-Berke, Wood, Edmonds, Kessler, Regala, Cooper, Scott, Anderson, Dickerson, Santos and Lovick.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Meeting Date: January 17, 2000.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Deborah Frazier (786-7152).

Background: Administrative responsibilities for child care and early learning programs are distributed across several state agencies. Several state agencies are also purchasers of child care services.

The Washington State Child Care Coordinating Committee, established by the Legislature in 1988, is charged with the responsibility to advise the Legislature and state agencies on improving the quality, availability and affordability of early care and education programs for children and youth in Washington State. The Committee's most recent report to the Legislature states, "Despite much progress, many parts of the system are fragmented and work at cross purposes."

Summary of Bill: Creates the Office of Child Care and Early Education as an executive branch agency with the following responsibilities:

- administer child care and early learning programs;
- standardize audits, oversight visits, performance benchmarks, and licensing criteria;
and
- coordinate state agency efforts to purchase, deliver and arrange child care effectively.

Creates the position of administrator and permits up to seven staff members. Allows the administrator to appoint advisory committees or councils. Establishes guidelines for committee and council representation and terms. Authorizes the office to adopt rules.

Transfers the powers, duties, functions, records, appropriations, personnel, rules and pending business of the following state entities, as they pertain to child care and early learning programs, to the Office of Child Care and Early Education:

- Higher Education Coordinating Board;
- State Board for Community and Technical Colleges;
- Office of Financial Management;
- Department of Personnel;
- Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development;
- Child Care Coordinating Committee;
- Department of Social and Health Services;
- Department of Health;
- Family Policy Council;
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- Department of Labor and Industries; and
- Washington Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 11, 2000.

Effective Date: July 1, 2001.