

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5136

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As of January 22, 2021

**Title:** An act relating to prohibiting fees for child care licenses.

**Brief Description:** Prohibiting fees for child care licenses.

**Sponsors:** Senators Wilson, C., Frockt, Nguyen and Short.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/22/21.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Prohibits the secretary of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families from charging fees to the licensee for obtaining a child care license.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Ailey Kato (786-7434)

**Background:** Current law requires the secretary of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to charge fees to the licensee for obtaining a child care license. The secretary has the discretion to waive fees if the fees would not be in the best interest of public health and safety, or when the fees would be to the financial disadvantage of the state. Fees charged must be based on, but must not exceed, the cost to DCYF for the licensure of the activity and may include costs of necessary inspection.

DCYF must establish the fees in rule. The annual fee for family home providers is \$30, and the annual fee for child care centers is \$125 for the first 12 children plus \$12 for each additional child.

**Summary of Bill:** DCYF is prohibited from charging fees to the licensee for obtaining a

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child care license.

**Appropriation:** The bill contains a null and void clause requiring specific funding be provided in an omnibus appropriation act.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: The child care industry was in a crisis before the pandemic, and it has gotten worse. Providers are not making living wages, and this industry is predominantly run by women, especially women of color, immigrants and refugees. Although the fee seems like a small dollar amount, this is a lot for the struggling child care industry. This bill is a direct way for the state to help child care providers and can help bring more providers into the industry. DCYF has increased the fees in recent years. During this time of economic challenge, eliminating fees will help an industry when they need it. Child care is critical for getting people back to work and for economic recovery.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Claire Wilson, Prime Sponsor; Amy Anderson, Association of Washington Business; Julie Schroath, Creative Kids Learning Center.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.