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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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**HOUSE BILL**

**No. 324**      Session of  
2007

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INTRODUCED BY BIANCUCCI, FABRIZIO, KOTIK, DERMODY, ROEBUCK,  
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REICHLEY, SANTONI, SOLOBAY, STABACK, STURLA, WALKO,  
WOJNAROSKI, YOUNGBLOOD, YUDICHAK AND CURRY, FEBRUARY 9, 2007

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, FEBRUARY 9, 2007

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AN ACT

1 Providing for a comprehensive interagency plan for child day-  
2 care services and early childhood development services and  
3 for the powers and duties of the Department of Public  
4 Welfare.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Child Day  
9 Care and Early Childhood Development State Plan Act.

10 Section 2. Definitions.

11 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
12 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
13 context clearly indicates otherwise:

14 "Child day care." Care in lieu of parental care given for  
15 part of the 24-hour day to children under 16 years of age, away  
16 from their own homes. The term does not include child day care  
17 furnished in places of worship during religious services.

1 "Department." The Department of Public Welfare of the  
2 Commonwealth.

3 "Early childhood development services." Services which are  
4 intended to provide an environment which enhances the  
5 educational, social, cultural, emotional and recreational  
6 development of children from birth through eight years of age  
7 but which are not intended to serve as a substitute for  
8 compulsory academic programs.

9 Section 3. Annual comprehensive State plan for child day-care  
10 and early childhood development services.

11 (a) Annual plan.--Through an annual State plan on child day-  
12 care and early childhood development services, the department,  
13 in coordination with the Department of Health and the Department  
14 of Education, shall establish goals and objectives and review  
15 and assess the State's child day-care and early childhood  
16 development service delivery system, including State efforts to  
17 assure the provision of accessible, available and affordable  
18 quality child day-care and early childhood development services  
19 to the general public. The plan shall be developed in relation  
20 to Statewide and local needs and shall take into consideration  
21 available demographic studies. It shall reflect the needs of  
22 families in different social, economic and cultural  
23 circumstances and the needs of children of different ages and  
24 stages of development and of children with special needs.

25 (b) Submission.--No later than May 1 of each year, the  
26 department shall submit to the Governor, the Chief Clerk of the  
27 Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives a  
28 State plan on child day-care and early childhood development  
29 services for the ensuing year.

30 (c) Common policies and practices.--In the development and

1 implementation of an annual State plan, the department shall  
2 promote common policies and practices in programs to the fullest  
3 extent possible and develop mechanisms for interagency  
4 collaboration to create a coordinated State child day-care and  
5 early childhood development services delivery system. This  
6 subsection includes simplification and coordination of the  
7 application process for families needing services.

8 (d) Public hearings.--To prepare the State plan, the  
9 department shall hold at least four public hearings in different  
10 geographic locations in this Commonwealth to seek input and  
11 recommendations from parents, early childhood development  
12 professionals, child day-care providers, child advocates,  
13 educators, representatives of local government, health and human  
14 service organizations, health care professionals, labor  
15 organizations, businesses, school officials and other  
16 individuals or agencies interested in issues affecting children  
17 and families.

18 (e) Contents of plans.--The State plan shall include the  
19 following information:

20 (1) A summary of recommendations submitted to the  
21 department pursuant to Statewide public hearings and the  
22 department's response to the recommendations.

23 (2) The amount of Federal, State and local funds  
24 requested for child day-care and early childhood development  
25 services and the allocation of these funds, by the type of  
26 care and by administrative costs. Funding includes the Social  
27 Services Block Grant Act (Public Law 97-35, 42 U.S.C. § 1397  
28 et seq.); Titles I and VI of the Personal Responsibility and  
29 Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-  
30 193, 110 Stat. 2105); the Head Start Act (Public Law 97-35,

1 42 U.S.C. § 9831 et seq.); the act of December 19, 1990  
2 (P.L.1372, No.212), known as the Early Intervention Services  
3 System Act; and other pertinent State appropriations.

4 (3) A description of child day-care and early childhood  
5 development programs in this Commonwealth. This paragraph  
6 includes child day-care centers, group child day-care homes,  
7 family child day-care homes, school-age child day-care  
8 programs, child day care for teen parents, early intervention  
9 programs and Head Start programs.

10 (4) The unduplicated number of children served and  
11 assisted with Federal, State and local funds, by type of care  
12 and age; funding source for the services; the average  
13 duration of the child-care service; and the child capacity of  
14 regulated providers.

15 (5) Income eligibility guidelines for federally funded  
16 and State-funded child day-care and early childhood  
17 development services, sliding fee scales and the extent to  
18 which the income guidelines and fee scales are adjusted to  
19 reflect the most recent available State income data.

20 (6) The State's practices regarding the monitoring of  
21 child day-care and early childhood development programs to  
22 ensure the health, safety and welfare of children. In  
23 describing the monitoring system, the department shall  
24 identify the extent of announced and unannounced inspections  
25 of regulated providers, the level of compliance with State  
26 standards and the staff-to-provider ratio to accomplish this  
27 task. This paragraph includes recommendations on ways to  
28 improve both the enforcement and monitoring of standards and  
29 compliance with standards.

30 (7) The department's coordination, identification or

1 arrangement of training for providers in specific program  
2 areas that are designed to improve the quality of child day-  
3 care and early childhood development services. The department  
4 shall identify any Federal, State, local or private funding  
5 allocated for training; the objectives of the training; the  
6 way in which training will be accomplished; and an evaluation  
7 of the previous year's training programs.

8 (8) An analysis of any recent demonstration projects  
9 related to child day care or early childhood development  
10 established by the department or the Department of Health or  
11 the Department of Education, using Federal or State funds,  
12 along with a summary of the cost of the projects and the  
13 findings and recommendations of the department.

14 (9) A summary of any recent reports, data or surveys  
15 concerning the compensation of child day-care and early  
16 childhood development professionals, loan forgiveness  
17 programs, the State's reimbursement rates and any changes in  
18 rates recommended by the department.

19 (10) A summary of the most recent available demographic  
20 information related to the need for child day-care and early  
21 childhood development programs in this Commonwealth.

22 (11) Efforts by the private sector and State and local  
23 government to encourage employer-sponsored child day-care  
24 services and policies aimed at addressing the child day-care  
25 needs of working parents.

26 (12) A description of the responsibilities and programs  
27 of various State departments with respect to child day-care  
28 and early childhood development services and how coordination  
29 between agencies is addressed. The department shall describe  
30 its responsibilities and programs under various program

1 offices and related programs or services available through  
2 the Department of Aging, the Department of Community and  
3 Economic Development, the Department of Education, the  
4 Department of Health or the Department of Labor and Industry.

5 (13) Standards and training for child day-care providers  
6 who receive payment through Federal or State child day-care  
7 or early childhood development programs. The standards and  
8 training shall promote the health, safety and developmental  
9 needs of children.

10 (14) Identification of gaps in child day-care and early  
11 childhood development services, unmet needs, administrative  
12 barriers that serve as obstacles to obtaining services and  
13 recommendations on how the State can address these issues.

14 (15) Statutory and regulatory changes recommended by the  
15 department to address the quality, affordability and  
16 availability of child day-care and early childhood  
17 development services.

18 Section 10. Effective date.

19 This act shall take effect in 60 days.