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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 2809 Session of  
2020

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INTRODUCED BY HANBIDGE, HILL-EVANS, T. DAVIS, SHUSTERMAN,  
DRISCOLL, FREEMAN, LONGIETTI, SCHLOSSBERG, MADDEN, ROZZI,  
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WILLIAMS, ROEBUCK, McNEILL, KIM, HOHENSTEIN, CALTAGIRONE,  
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MURT, YOUNGBLOOD, McCLINTON, DEASY, INNAMORATO, READSHAW,  
STURLA, DONATUCCI, FRANKEL, STEPHENS, KIRKLAND, HOWARD,  
WEBSTER, KOSIEROWSKI AND O'MARA, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

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AN ACT

1 Establishing the COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Grant  
2 Program and the COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Fund  
3 to provide grants to essential workers to be used for  
4 childcare during the COVID-19 disaster emergency; imposing  
5 duties on the Department of Community and Economic  
6 Development; and providing for a transfer of Federal money.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Short title.

10 This act shall be known and may be cited as the COVID-19  
11 Childcare for Essential Workers Grant Program Act.

12 Section 2. Definitions.

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

16 "CARES Act." The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic  
17 Security Act (Public Law 116-136, 134 Stat. 281).

1 "Childcare." Care in lieu of parental care for part of a 24-  
2 hour day by an eligible provider, as described in 55 Pa. Code §  
3 3041.13(a) (relating to parent choice), or a relative of the  
4 child who provides the care for the child if the relative  
5 complies with the applicable State requirements for providing  
6 the care.

7 "COVID-19." The coronavirus disease 2019, an infectious  
8 disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus  
9 2 that was first identified during December 2019 in Wuhan,  
10 China.

11 "Department." The Department of Community and Economic  
12 Development of the Commonwealth.

13 "Essential worker." An individual employed by or under  
14 contract with a life-sustaining business or entity who worked  
15 during the proclamation of disaster emergency and is engaged in  
16 any of the following industries:

- 17 (1) Healthcare and social assistance.
- 18 (2) Food manufacturing or food retail facilities.
- 19 (3) Janitorial services to buildings and dwellings.
- 20 (4) Transit and ground passenger transportation.
- 21 (5) Security services for industries listed in this  
22 definition.
- 23 (6) Commercial industries not closed during the  
24 proclamation of disaster emergency.

25 "Fund." The COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Fund  
26 established under section 4.

27 "Proclamation of disaster emergency." The proclamation of  
28 disaster emergency issued by the Governor on March 6, 2020,  
29 published at 50 Pa.B. 1644 (March 21, 2020), and any renewal of  
30 the state of disaster emergency.

1 "Program." The COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers  
2 Program established under this act.

3 Section 3. Program.

4 (a) Establishment.--The COVID-19 Childcare for Essential  
5 Workers Grant Program is established within the department.

6 (b) Duties of department.--The department shall provide  
7 grants under the program in accordance with this act to  
8 essential workers adversely affected by COVID-19. Grants  
9 provided under the program shall be used for childcare services.

10 Section 4. Establishment of fund.

11 The COVID-19 Childcare for Essential Workers Fund is  
12 established in the State Treasury. Money in the fund is  
13 appropriated to the department on a continuing basis for the  
14 purpose of awarding grants to essential workers under the  
15 program.

16 Section 5. Application forms.

17 (a) Development.--The department shall develop a grant  
18 application form for applicants, including the following  
19 information:

20 (1) Name, address, contact information and annual income  
21 of the applicant.

22 (2) Name, address and contact information of the  
23 applicant's employer.

24 (3) Name, age and childcare provider for each child of  
25 the applicant.

26 (4) Current cost of childcare per month paid by the  
27 applicant.

28 (5) Amount of grant money requested under the program.

29 (6) Any other information or documentation that the  
30 department deems necessary and appropriate.

1 (b) Submission.--An applicant must submit the grant  
2 application form and documentation required under subsection (a)  
3 to the department in the manner prescribed by the department.  
4 Section 6. Eligibility.

5 (a) General rule.--Except as otherwise provided in  
6 subsection (b), grants may be awarded to essential workers.

7 (b) Exception.--Individuals who earn more than \$80,000 in  
8 gross annual income per year or married couples who earn more  
9 than \$120,000 in gross annual income per year shall not be  
10 eligible for grants under this act.

11 Section 7. Applicability.

12 This act applies to childcare costs for children from birth  
13 until the day prior to the date of the child's 14th birthday.  
14 Children with disabilities 18 years of age or younger may be  
15 eligible at the discretion of the department.

16 Section 8. Award of grants.

17 (a) Distribution of grants.--No later than 20 days after  
18 receipt of the application form, the department shall make a  
19 determination on the application and the amount to be awarded.

20 (b) Consideration.--In determining grants to be awarded, the  
21 department shall give priority to an applicant whose gross  
22 annual income is less than \$35,000.

23 (c) Notice.--After making a determination under subsection  
24 (a), the department shall provide written notice to the  
25 applicant of the award amount or denial of the grant. Notice of  
26 a grant award to an applicant shall include the amount of the  
27 grant money awarded and all conditions or restrictions on the  
28 use of the grant money. Notice of a denial, either in part or in  
29 full, shall include the reasons for the denial.

30 Section 9. Guidelines.

1 The department may promulgate rules, regulations and  
2 guidelines for the implementation and administration of the  
3 program.

4 Section 10. Public notice.

5 (a) Availability of grants.--The department shall provide  
6 information regarding the availability of grants under the  
7 program on the department's publicly accessible Internet  
8 website.

9 (b) Report.--Following the termination or expiration of the  
10 proclamation of disaster emergency, the department shall post on  
11 the department's publicly accessible Internet website the amount  
12 of grant money awarded under the program.

13 Section 11. Limitation on award of grants.

14 Subject to the availability of funds, a grant to an applicant  
15 shall not exceed \$750 per month per child.

16 Section 12. Transfer of Federal money.

17 The sum of \$100,000,000 of the money received by the  
18 Commonwealth under the CARES Act shall be transferred to the  
19 fund.

20 Section 13. Expiration.

21 (a) Notice.--Upon the expiration or termination of the  
22 disaster emergency proclamation, the department shall transmit  
23 notice of the expiration or termination of the program under  
24 subsection (b) to the Legislative Reference Bureau for  
25 publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

26 (b) Authority.--The authority of the department to award  
27 grants under the program shall expire three months after the  
28 publication of the notice required in subsection (a).

29 Section 14. Effective date.

30 This act shall take effect in 30 days.