

SUBJECT: Requiring TWC to develop a strategic plan for the child-care workforce

COMMITTEE: International Relations and Economic Development — committee
substitute recommended

VOTE: 6 ayes — Button, C. Morales, Beckley, C. Bell, Metcalf, Ordaz Perez

0 nays

3 absent — Canales, Hunter, Larson

WITNESSES: For — Lyn Lucas, Camp Fire First Texas; Sandy Dochen, Early Matters Greater Austin; Kimberly Kofron, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Priscilla Camacho, Alamo Colleges District; Charles Cohn, Angels Care and Learning Center; Marnie Glaser, Child Care Associates; Mandi Kimball, Children At Risk; Christine Wright, City of San Antonio; Jennifer Toon, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Tom Hedrick, Dillon Joyce Ltd.; Libby McCabe, Early Matters and The Commit Partnership; Jonathan Lewis, Every Texan; Thamara Narvaez, Harris County Commissioners Court; Ky Ash, Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas; Melanie Rubin, North Texas Early Education Alliance; David Feigen, Texans Care for Children; Stephanie Retherford, Texas Licensed Child Care Association; Jennifer Lucy, TexProtects; Dana Harris, The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; Julie Wheeler, Travis County Commissioners Court; Ashley Harris, United Ways of Texas; Brooke Freeland; Vanessa MacDougal)

Against — None

On — Reagan Miller, Texas Workforce Commission

DIGEST: CSHB 619 would require the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to prepare a strategic plan for improving the quality of the infant, toddler, preschool, and school-age child care workforce in Texas.

The plan would have to include best practices from local workforce

development boards in Texas and other programs designed to support child-care workers, specific recommendations for improving the infant and toddler child-care workforce, and a timeline and benchmarks for TWC and local workforce development boards to implement the recommendations from the strategic plan. The strategic plan also would have to include recommendations for:

- local workforce development boards to improve, sustain, and support the child-care workforce;
- increasing compensation for and reducing turnover of child-care workers;
- eliminating racial and gender pay disparity in the child-care workforce;
- increasing paid opportunities for professional development and education for child-care workers, including apprenticeships;
- increasing participation in the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System; and
- public and private institutions of higher education to increase the use of articulation agreements with school districts and open-enrollment charter schools and assist in the education and training of child-care workers.

TWC would have to convene a workgroup including child-care providers, community stakeholders, and child-care workers to assist the commission in developing the plan.

In creating the plan, TWC would have to use the following information:

- demographic data of child-care workers in Texas, including the race, ethnicity, gender, and education attainment of child-care workers and the ages of the children the workers serve;
- compensation data for child-care workers disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and education attainment;
- demographic and compensation data for a representative sample set of child-care facilities in Texas;

- and information provided by the workgroup.

By December 31, 2022, TWC would have to provide the strategic plan to the governor, lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives. The commission would have to update the strategic plan every three years.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 619 would help the state improve early childhood education outcomes, address income and education disparities between child-care workers and other educators, and support the Texas economy by requiring the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to create a strategic plan to support the child-care workforce.

Despite being crucial to early childhood development, working families, and businesses in Texas, child-care workers are underpaid relative to other educators, and many of these child-care workers are women of color. CSHB 619 would begin to address the economic and educational disparities impacting the child-care workforce by requiring TWC to work with stakeholders to make recommendations to local workforce development boards, identify opportunities for career advancement and professional development, and create a timeline for the implementation of the strategic plan's recommendations. Creating the strategic plan would be the first step to improving early childhood development outcomes in Texas while supporting the child-care workforce and working families.

The bill would not diminish child-care choices for parents nor require parents to make certain decisions regarding child-care. The focus of the bill is studying racial and gender disparities in child-care worker pay, identifying career advancement opportunities for child-care workers, and making recommendations to improve the child-care workforce.

**CRITICS
SAY:**

CSHB 619 would unnecessarily involve the state in the economics of child-care in Texas, where there already is a wide market that provides many options for parents.

NOTES: According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have no impact on general revenue related funds, but would have a negative impact of about \$1.3 million over five years to Workforce Commission Federal Account 5026. The bill would make no appropriation but could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds to implement the provisions of the bill.