

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 619
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Childcare workers have become an essential asset to families who work and have children. Not only do they provide care, they are a part of child's academic, health, and social development. Although they play a critical part, childcare workers' pay, access to public benefits and lack of opportunities is not reflected. The profession lacks a framework to improve professional qualifications and standards of living.

H.B. 619 will develop a strategic plan to improve the quality of the child-care workforce. This will include collecting data and recommending changes. Recommendations in the bill aim to diminish racial and gender disparities, reduce pay gaps, add training, increase opportunities, and address health concerns. It will provide standards to change current and future educational opportunities to be specific to caretakers including those seeking education in institutions of higher learning.

H.B. 619 amends current law relating to developing a strategic plan to support the child-care workforce.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 302, Labor Code, by adding Section 302.0062, as follows:

Sec. 302.0062. STRATEGIC PLAN TO SUPPORT CHILD-CARE WORKFORCE. (a) Requires 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 this state. Requires that the strategic plan include:

- (1) recommendations for local workforce development boards to improve, sustain, and support the child-care workforce;
- (2) recommendations for increasing compensation for and reducing turnover of child-care workers;
- (3) recommendations for eliminating racial and gender pay disparity in the child-care workforce;
- (4) recommendations for increasing paid opportunities for professional development and education for child-care workers, including apprenticeships;
- (5) best practices from local workforce development boards in this state and other programs designed to support child-care workers;

(6) recommendations for increasing participation in the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System;

(7) recommendations for 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;

(8) specific recommendations for improving the infant and toddler child-care workforce; and

(9) a timeline and benchmarks for TWC and local workforce development boards to implement recommendations from the strategic plan.

(b) Requires TWC to convene a workgroup to assist TWC in developing the plan. Requires that the workgroup include child-care providers, community stakeholders, and child-care workers.

(c) Requires TWC to use the following information in creating the plan:

(1) demographic data of child-care workers in this state, including the race, ethnicity, gender, and educational attainment of child-care workers, and the ages of the children the worker serves;

(2) compensation data for child-care workers disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and educational attainment;

(3) the information described by Subdivisions (1) and (2) for a representative sample set of child-care facilities in the state; and

(4) information provided by the workgroup established under Subsection (b).

(d) Requires TWC to provide the strategic plan prepared under this section to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives.

(e) Requires TWC to update the strategic plan prepared under this section every three years.

SECTION 2. Requires TWC, not later than December 31, 2022, to make the strategic plan required by Section 302.0062, Labor Code, as added by this Act, available to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2021.