



AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE BUSINESS TASK FORCE ON CHILD CARE; ESTABLISHING MEMBERSHIP; ESTABLISHING DUTIES; REQUIRING A REPORT; ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Business task force on child care -- members -- meetings. (1) Subject to available funding, the department of labor and industry shall convene and facilitate a business task force on child care to examine the effects of child care affordability and accessibility on the workforce and on Montana businesses.

(2) (a) The governor shall appoint nine voting members of the task force.

(b) Seven of the task force members must represent the following business sectors:

(i) health care;

(ii) manufacturing;

(iii) retail, leisure, or hospitality;

(iv) finance or insurance;

(v) technology;

(vi) a licensed day-care center as defined in 52-2-703; and

(vii) a family or group day-care home, as those terms are defined in 52-2-703, that has obtained a registration certificate from the department of public health and human services.

(c) The remaining two members of the task force must represent chambers of commerce, with one appointee located in the eastern region of the state and one appointee located in the western region of the state.

(d) The task force membership must be representative of both the eastern and western regions of the

state and must include representatives of small, medium, and large businesses and a business owned by a tribal member.

(3) The governor shall appoint representatives of the following agencies and entities as nonvoting members of the task force to provide data and information to the task force on request:

- (a) the governor's office;
- (b) the department of labor and industry;
- (c) the early childhood and family support services division of the department of public health and human services;
- (d) a statewide child-care resource and referral agency;
- (e) an organization that advocates for early learning; and
- (f) an organization that represents Montana-based foundations that work on matters related to child care for infants and children up to 3 years of age.

(4) The governor and the department of labor and industry may each appoint one additional nonvoting member of the task force.

(5) The voting members of the task force shall elect the presiding officer and vice presiding officer by majority vote.

(6) Members of the task force serve without pay but are entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses as provided in 2-18-501 through 2-18-503 for one in-person meeting. The task force may hold additional meetings by electronic means.

(7) Task force meetings are subject to the open meetings and public participation requirements of Title 2, chapter 3.

(8) The department of labor and industry shall provide staff support to the task force. The department director or the director's designee shall convene the first meeting of the task force no later than July 15, 2021.

Section 2. Business task force on child care -- duties -- report. (1) The business task force on child care shall:

- (a) identify barriers to access to child care for parents of infants and children up to 3 years of age; and
- (b) make recommendations on ways to:

(i) improve the availability and affordability of child care for infants and children up to 3 years of age;
and

(ii) enhance business performance and workforce development through improved access to child care for employees with young children.

(2) In developing its recommendations, the task force shall evaluate current available data and strategic plans including but not limited to:

(a) child care market rate survey reports, including data related to the geographic distribution of licensed early child care providers and the demand for, cost, and availability of those providers;

(b) best practices and innovations for employer-supported early child care;

(c) research related to the economic and workforce impacts of employee access to high-quality, affordable early child care, including research conducted by the bureau of business and economic research at the university of Montana and by the department of labor and industry;

(d) the strategic plan for Montana's early childhood system, developed by the early childhood services bureau of the department of public health and human services; and

(e) reports examining child care capacity in the state.

(3) The task force shall:

(a) provide periodic written updates on its work and its research to the economic affairs interim committee provided for in 5-5-223 and the children, families, health, and human services interim committee provided for in 5-5-225 during the 2021-2022 interim; and

(b) offer to provide presentations to the committees about the task force's work.

(4) (a) The task force shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the governor, to the legislature as provided in 5-10-211, and to the economic affairs interim committee and the children, families, health, and human services interim committees no later than October 31, 2022. The report must include findings related to:

(i) incentives, including tax incentives, for employer-supported child care and other employer practices that support the needs of employees who have young children;

(ii) incentives for and research on innovations in business-led child care models;

(iii) recommendations for streamlining requirements related to registering and becoming licensed to

operate as a day-care facility; and

(iv) recommendations for appropriate modifications to administrative rules in order to facilitate development of day-care facilities.

(b) The findings must take into consideration and encompass businesses of various sizes, sectors, and locations, including urban, rural, frontier, and tribal locations.

Section 3. Business task force on child care special revenue account. (1) There is a business task force on child care special revenue account to the credit of the department of labor and industry.

(2) The account consists of grants, gifts, and donations from public and private sources that are made to the department of labor and industry for the purpose of supporting the work of the business task force on child care provided for in [section 1].

(3) Money in the account must be used by the department of labor and industry to support the activities carried out by the business task force on child care.

(4) Money in the account that is unencumbered and unexpended at the end of the biennium must be transferred to the department of labor and industry. The department shall use the reverted money to provide grants to businesses to support child care options for employees with young children.

Section 4. Appropriation. There is appropriated \$45,000 from the business task force on child care special revenue account to the department of labor and industry for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, to support the activities of the task force established in [section 1], including support for a .50 FTE.

Section 5. Effective date. [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

Section 6. Termination. [This act] terminates December 31, 2022.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HB 624, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2021.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2021.

HOUSE BILL NO. 624

INTRODUCED BY A. BUCKLEY, S. O'BRIEN, W. SALES, D. SALOMON, F. ANDERSON, E. BUTTREY, T.

WELCH

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