

Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission

Members of the Committee

Senator Beth Martinez Humenik, Chair
Representative Brittany Pettersen, Vice-Chair

Representative Jonathan Singer	Senator Vicki Marble
Representative James Wilson	Senator Michael Merrifield

Legislative Council Staff

Rachel Kurtz-Phelan, Senior Research Analyst
Lauren Schreier, Fiscal Analyst
Lisa Gezelter, Research Analyst

Office of Legislative Legal Services

Julie Pelegriin, Assistant Director

November 2015

Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission

Committee Charge

Pursuant to state law (Section 26-6.5-203, C.R.S.), the Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission (ECSRLC) must meet at least four times per year to study issues concerning early childhood and school readiness. Topics to be studied include: health care, mental health, parental involvement, family support, child care, and early learning. The commission is required to solicit input from the public, especially from those who have expertise in early childhood and school readiness issues. The commission is also required to meet with the Early Childhood Leadership Commission, which is a group focused on improving outcomes for young children from birth to age eight, to discuss policy concerning early childhood and school readiness.

Committee Activities

The ECSRLC held six meetings during the 2015 interim. Presentations were made by state departments, early childhood professionals, child care providers, foundations, and members of the public on a wide range of subjects related to early childhood, including:

- early childhood school discipline;
- mental health and child welfare;
- child care licensing and demographics;
- home visitation programs;
- foundation funding and pay-for-success programs;
- transitioning children from preschool to kindergarten; and
- the Early Childhood Colorado Framework.

The ECSRLC divided itself into five breakout groups to focus on specific topics, solicit stakeholder feedback, and generate ideas for legislation. The breakout groups met at ECSRLC meetings, and several stakeholders participated in these discussions. The commission was divided into breakout groups as follows:

- child welfare, home visitation, and transitioning to kindergarten;
- teachers;
- child care licensing; demographics; and family, friend, and neighbor care;
- equalizing access to care, tax credits, Colorado's Early Learning Challenge Grant, and Senate Bill 10-191; and
- past legislation by the ECSRLC.

The following subsections discuss the ECSRLC's activities during the 2015 interim.

Early childhood school discipline. The commission heard from representatives of the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the University of Colorado School of Medicine about suspension and expulsion rates in early childhood centers and the collection of data to document disparities in suspension and expulsion rates among demographic groups. The commission and panelists explored issues of

teacher training and competency, appropriate intervention strategies, the need for mental health consultation infrastructure in early childhood settings, and the impact of behavioral challenges on early childhood classrooms.

Mental health and child welfare. Testimony was provided by Voices for Children Court Appointed Special Advocates about the needs of young children who have been victims of abuse or neglect, focusing on children ages 0 to 2. The ECSRLC explored the mental health care and early childhood education needs of young children in foster care.

Child care licensing and demographics. The commission was briefed by a representative from the Early Childhood Education Association of Colorado on issues related to the demographics of child care in Colorado and issues related to licensing of child care centers. The ECSRLC discussed the reasons for the recent decrease in the number of child care centers in the state, as well as the cost of child care and the wages earned by childcare workers.

Home visitation programs. Representatives from the Nurse-Family Partnership and Clayton Early Learning addressed the ECSRLC about the work currently being done by visiting nurses, including working with expectant mothers and parents of young children to improve health and education outcomes in at-risk communities.

Foundation funding and pay-for-success programs. Representatives from the Temple Buell Foundation, the Rose Community Foundation, and the Meraage Foundation spoke to the ECSRLC about their work providing funding for projects ranging from parenting education, home visiting, mental health, professional development for educators, capacity building in rural areas, and the use of public-private partnerships to pursue innovative cost-effective programs. Senator Mike Johnston spoke to the ECSRLC concerning the implementation of House Bill 15-1317, the Pay for Success Act. The Pay for Success Act encourages partnerships between philanthropists and foundations and educators to address existing issues in educational programs. Partners must agree on measurable metrics to assess the impact of the funding over time.

Transitioning children from preschool to kindergarten. Superintendents from Denver Public Schools, Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Aurora Public Schools, and the Douglas County School District, in addition to representatives from the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County and Mapleton Public Schools, informed commission members about how their schools prepare children for the transition from preschool to kindergarten. Presenters stressed issues concerning crowded classrooms, an existing achievement gap among students entering kindergarten, lack of adequate funding for preschool classroom expansions, and assistance for students who may not have attended preschool in their district transition to kindergarten.

The Early Childhood Colorado Framework. Members of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission presented the updated Early Childhood Colorado Framework to the ECSRLC. Created in 2008, the framework provides a comprehensive resource and guide for early childhood educational systems. The framework allows educators to communicate effectively on the latest research and provide resources to address gaps that may exist in the educational system. The framework was updated in 2015 and will continue to be updated to reflect current best practices as necessary.

Committee Recommendations

As a result of commission discussion and deliberation, the ECSRLC recommends the following three bills for consideration in the 2016 legislative session.

Bill A — This bill repeals the contingent start of the refundable Colorado child tax credit, allowing the credit to be claimed beginning in tax year 2016. Under current law, the credit becomes effective beginning with tax year 2016 only if Congress passes the Marketplace Fairness Act (or similar legislation). The Marketplace Fairness Act is a federal bill that requires out-of-state retailers to collect and remit sales taxes to states that have met minimum simplification requirements for sales tax administration. To date, Congress has not passed the bill or an alternate measure with similar requirements.

Under this bill, beginning in tax year 2016, qualifying taxpayers may claim a refundable state income tax credit equal to 30 percent, 15 percent, or 5 percent of the federal child tax credit depending on their federal adjusted gross income (AGI). The credit is capped for single filers at an AGI of \$75,000, and for joint filers at an AGI of \$85,000.

Bill B — The bill removes the existing ten-county cap on the number of counties that may participate in the Child Care Assistance Cliff Effect Pilot Program. It also removes the two-year participation requirement for counties if the Department of Human Services (DHS) determines that participation during a shorter period will still contribute relevant data to the evaluation of the pilot program.

The Cliff Effect Pilot Program was created by Senate Bill 12-022 to allow counties to modify their child care assistance programs so that families are able to phase out their participation in the program as they enter the workforce and receive higher incomes. Subsequently, Senate Bill 14-003 was enacted, which created a cash fund for the pilot program and appropriated \$1.3 million to fund county pilot programs. Currently, ten counties are participating in the pilot. The pilot program is scheduled to conclude on June 30, 2019.

Bill C — The bill creates a task force to address issues relating to the child care needs of low-income parents. The task force is housed in the Workforce Development Council in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE). Its mission is to develop strategies and procedures for state and local agencies, and institutions of higher education, to use in coordinating efforts that address the child care needs of low-income parents who are seeking to advance their education.

Specifically, the task force is required to:

- identify and reduce barriers to obtaining child care;
- determine whether state, federal, and campus-based financial resources are meeting the needs of parents pursuing further education;
- review and streamline administrative processes for the provision of child care;
- create a plan for communicating child care availability and processes; and
- recommend legislation to address issues related to child care for parents pursuing further education.

The bill sets the conditions for the selection and composition of the 15-member task force.

Task force members serve without per diem or reimbursement of costs. CDLE, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), the Department of Higher Education (DHE), and DHS are required to provide staff support to the task force. The task force must hold its first meeting no later than September 1, 2016, and submit reports to the health and human services committees of the General Assembly and the Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission. The task force is repealed July 1, 2017.

**Second Regular Session
Seventieth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

BILL A

LLS NO. 16-0340.01 Ed DeCecco x4216

HOUSE BILL

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Singer, Pettersen

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Merrifield and Kefalas,

House Committees

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING THE START OF THE CHILD TAX CREDIT.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)

Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission. In 2013, the general assembly created a child tax credit against state income taxes for a resident individual. But the credit, which is a percentage of the federal child tax credit based on the taxpayer's income, is only allowed after the United States congress enacts a version of the "Marketplace Fairness Act".

The bill repeals the contingent start of the tax credit and instead

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

allows the credit to be claimed for any income tax year beginning with the 2016 income tax year.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 39-22-129, **amend**
3 (3) (a); and **repeal** (4) as follows:

4 **39-22-129. Child tax credit - legislative declaration -**
5 **definitions.** (3) (a) For an income tax year specified in subsection (4) of
6 ~~this section~~ YEARS COMMENCING ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2016, a
7 resident individual who claims a federal child tax credit for an eligible
8 child on the individual's federal tax return is allowed a child tax credit
9 against the income taxes due under this article for the same tax year.

10 ~~(4) No credit is allowed under this section until the United States~~
11 ~~congress has enacted the "Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013", or any~~
12 ~~other act with substantially similar requirements, and the general~~
13 ~~assembly has enacted a law to implement the minimum simplification~~
14 ~~requirements in the congressional act. The credit allowed under this~~
15 ~~section may be claimed for any income tax year beginning with the~~
16 ~~income tax year during which the last prerequisite bill under this~~
17 ~~subsection (4) becomes law; except that, if the last bill becomes law after~~
18 ~~October 1 of a given year, the credit is first available in the next income~~
19 ~~tax year, and in no case may the credit be claimed prior to the 2014~~
20 ~~income tax year.~~

21 **SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
22 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
23 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August
24 10, 2016, if adjournment sine die is on May 11, 2016); except that, if a
25 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the

1 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act
2 within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect
3 unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
4 November 2016 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
5 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

**Second Regular Session
Seventieth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

BILL B

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LLS NO. 16-0343.01 Brita Darling x2241

SENATE BILL

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Martinez Humenik, Merrifield

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Pettersen, Singer, Wilson

Senate Committees

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING REMOVING CERTAIN LIMITATIONS ON THE PILOT**
102 **PROGRAM TO MITIGATE CLIFF EFFECT FOR LOW-INCOME**
103 **FAMILIES WHO ARE WORKING AND RECEIVING CHILD CARE**
104 **ASSISTANCE.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)

Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission. Currently, participation in the pilot program to mitigate the

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Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

cliff effect for low-income families who are working and receiving child care assistance is limited to up to 10 counties. The bill removes that restriction and allows the executive director of the department of human services (executive director), subject to available appropriations, to select additional counties to participate in the program.

In addition, the bill removes the deadline for applications to participate in the pilot program and allows the executive director to approve pilot programs of less than 2 years if a shorter program will contribute relevant data.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 26-2-808, **amend** (2)
3 and (6) as follows:

4 **26-2-808. Pilot program to mitigate cliff effect for low-income**
5 **families who are working and receiving child care assistance -**
6 **legislative declaration - county participation - fund - grant program**
7 **- report - repeal.** (2) Beginning on April 13, 2012, the state department
8 is authorized to develop and oversee a pilot program in which the
9 Colorado child care assistance program as outlined in section 26-2-805
10 is modified to mitigate the cliff effect for low-income families ~~that~~ WHO
11 are working and receiving child care assistance, referred to in this section
12 as the "pilot program". County departments of social services may apply
13 to the executive director or his or her designee to participate in the pilot
14 program. Counties are highly encouraged to collaborate with early
15 childhood councils and other community partners as necessary in the
16 development of the application. SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE MONEYS IN THE
17 FUND, the executive director or his or her designee may select ~~up to ten~~
18 THE counties that will participate in the pilot program as described in this
19 section. In selecting the counties, the executive director or his or her
20 designee shall seek diversity in the size of population, regional location,

1 and demographic composition and shall consider whether there will be
2 enough participants in each pilot program to enable researchers to
3 evaluate whether the strategies used in the pilot program have addressed
4 the cliff effect. The executive director or his or her designee shall enter
5 into a memorandum of understanding with each county department
6 selected to participate in the pilot program. The memorandum of
7 understanding governs the implementation of the pilot program in that
8 county, including but not limited to how the county decides which and
9 how many families can participate in the pilot program.

10 (6) A county may participate in the pilot program on and after July
11 1, 2012, and through June 30, 2019. A county shall operate the pilot
12 program for at least two years; ~~A county may apply to participate in the~~
13 ~~pilot program on or before January 1, 2017.~~ EXCEPT THAT THE EXECUTIVE
14 DIRECTOR OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE MAY APPROVE A SHORTER PILOT
15 PROGRAM IF THE PILOT PROGRAM WILL CONTRIBUTE RELEVANT DATA.
16 Each participating county shall identify the families participating in the
17 pilot program in that county. The state department shall collect all data on
18 the pilot program. The state department shall evaluate and report on the
19 pilot program using measurable outcomes.

20 **SECTION 2. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,
21 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
22 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

**Second Regular Session
Seventieth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

BILL C

Temporary storage location: S:\LCS\Council\Legcouncil\LC2015\Nov 10 Interim Committee Meeting\Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission\Bill C.wpd

LLS NO. 16-0344.01 Julie Pelegrin x2700

HOUSE BILL

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Pettersen, Singer

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Merrifield,

House Committees

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING A TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS THE CHILD CARE NEEDS OF**
102 **LOW-INCOME PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN AS THE PARENTS**
103 **SEEK TO ADVANCE THEIR EDUCATION.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)

Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission. The bill creates a task force to address the child care needs of low-income parents of young children as the parents seek to advance

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their education. The task force consists of the leaders, or their designees, of the departments of labor and employment, higher education, education, and human services; parents and representatives of organizations, appointed by the governor; and employees of county departments of human services or social services, selected by the executive director of the department of human services. The task force must identify and reduce, if possible, barriers to obtaining child care from the range of available federal, state, and private child care sources, determine whether the parents' child care needs can be met through existing sources, review and streamline the processes for providing child care for parents while they obtain education or training, communicate the availability of child care from public and private sources to parents who are seeking education or training, and recommend legislative changes, if necessary. By March 1, 2017, the task force must submit a report of its activities to the general assembly, and before July 1, 2017, the task force must submit the report to the early childhood and school readiness legislative commission. The task force is repealed, effective July 1, 2017.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 24-46.3-106 as follows:

24-46.3-106. Low-income parents of young children seeking education - child care needs - task force created - report - repeal.

(1) THERE IS HEREBY CREATED A TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES FOR STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO USE IN COORDINATING EFFORTS, AND TO IDENTIFY RESOURCES, TO ADDRESS THE CHILD CARE NEEDS OF LOW-INCOME PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN AS THE PARENTS SEEK TO ADVANCE THEIR EDUCATION. THE TASK FORCE CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

(a) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE, OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES;

(b) THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE;
AND

1 (c) THE FOLLOWING PERSONS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR:

2 (I) UP TO SEVEN, BUT NO FEWER THAN FIVE, PARENTS WHO HAVE
3 SOUGHT OR COMPLETED EDUCATION AND TRAINING WHILE PARENTING
4 YOUNG CHILDREN;

5 (II) TWO PERSONS WHO REPRESENT ORGANIZATIONS THAT SERVE
6 PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT AND
7 TRAINING;

8 (III) TWO PERSONS WHO ARE LICENSED CHILD CARE PROVIDERS;

9 (IV) TWO PERSONS WHO ARE DIRECTORS OF WORKFORCE
10 DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-10-103 (11) (c),
11 C.R.S.; AND

12 (d) TWO PERSONS SELECTED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE
13 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES WHO ARE EMPLOYED BY COUNTY
14 DEPARTMENTS OF HUMAN SERVICES OR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WORK IN
15 CHILD CARE ISSUES.

16 (2) (a) THE GOVERNOR SHALL APPOINT, AND THE EXECUTIVE
17 DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES SHALL SELECT, THE
18 MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE EFFECTIVE
19 DATE OF THIS SECTION. IN APPOINTING MEMBERS, THE GOVERNOR, TO THE
20 EXTENT PRACTICABLE, SHALL ENSURE THAT THE APPOINTED TASK FORCE
21 MEMBERSHIP REFLECTS THE ETHNIC, RACIAL, AND GENDER DIVERSITY
22 WITHIN THE STATE AND INCLUDES PERSONS FROM AREAS AROUND THE
23 STATE.

24 (b) THE TASK FORCE SHALL HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING NO LATER
25 THAN SEPTEMBER 1, 2016, AT THE CALL OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
26 THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, OR A DESIGNEE. AT THE FIRST
27 MEETING, THE MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE SHALL SELECT MEMBERS TO

1 SERVE AS CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR. THE TASK FORCE SHALL MEET AS OFTEN
2 AS NECESSARY AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR TO FULFILL ITS DUTIES.

3 (c) THE MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE SERVE WITHOUT PER DIEM
4 AND WITHOUT REIMBURSEMENT FOR COSTS. THE PARTICIPATING
5 DEPARTMENTS SHALL PROVIDE STAFF, AS NECESSARY, TO ASSIST THE TASK
6 FORCE IN FULFILLING ITS DUTIES.

7 (3) THE TASK FORCE SHALL ACCOMPLISH THE FOLLOWING DUTIES,
8 TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE FULL RANGE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CHILD
9 CARE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO LOW-INCOME PARENTS OF YOUNG
10 CHILDREN:

11 (a) IDENTIFY AND TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE REDUCE BARRIERS
12 THAT PREVENT LOW-INCOME PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN FROM
13 SECURING THE NECESSARY CHILD CARE SERVICES TO ENABLE THEM TO
14 OBTAIN EDUCATION OR TRAINING;

15 (b) DETERMINE WHETHER THE CHILD CARE NEEDS OF LOW-INCOME
16 PARENTS WHO ARE SEEKING EDUCATION AND TRAINING ARE ADEQUATELY
17 MET THROUGH THE COMBINATION OF EXISTING STATE, FEDERAL, AND
18 CAMPUS-BASED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS AND FUNDING SOURCES AND
19 STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE;

20 (c) REVIEW, COORDINATE, AND STREAMLINE THE ADMINISTRATIVE
21 PROCESSES FOR PROVIDING CHILD CARE TO LOW-INCOME PARENTS OF
22 YOUNG CHILDREN AS THE PARENTS SEEK TO ADVANCE THEIR EDUCATION;

23 (d) CREATE A PLAN FOR COMMUNICATING TO LOW-INCOME
24 PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN THE AVAILABILITY OF AND PROCESSES FOR
25 OBTAINING CHILD CARE SERVICES WHILE THE PARENTS ARE SEEKING
26 ADDITIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING;

27 (e) DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANY LEGISLATION THAT

1 MAY BE NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THE REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIED IN
2 PARAGRAPHS (a) TO (d) OF THIS SUBSECTION (3).

3 (4) ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1, 2017, THE TASK FORCE SHALL
4 SUBMIT TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH CARE AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
5 OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE HEALTH AND HUMAN
6 SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES,
7 A REPORT DESCRIBING THE RESULTS OF THE TASK FORCE'S WORK IN
8 IMPLEMENTING SUBSECTION (3) OF THIS SECTION, INCLUDING LEGISLATIVE
9 RECOMMENDATIONS, IF ANY. BEFORE JULY 1, 2017, THE TASK FORCE
10 SHALL ALSO SUBMIT THE REPORT TO THE EARLY CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL
11 READINESS LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION CREATED IN SECTION 26-6.5-203,
12 C.R.S.

13 (5) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2017.

14 **SECTION 2. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,
15 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
16 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.



State of Colorado

LEGISLATIVE REQUEST FOR INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE

(Please Note: Requests will become public upon final approval of the requesting legislator. Working drafts are considered work product. It is assumed the Legislative Council Staff and the Office of Legislative Legal Services will provide staff support for any approved interim committees and legislative members will receive per diem and reimbursement of expenses. Prior to approval, the Legislative Council may modify the nature and scope of the interim study committee requested. Approved interim study committees are subject to Joint Rule 24A, Interim Committee Requirements – Voting Requirements – Electronic Participation.)

To: Legislative Council

Requested by: Senator Todd
With support of: Senator(s) Kefalas

Re: Request for staffing for the Early Childhood and School Readiness
Legislative Commission

Date: 04/10/2015

The Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission was created in statute in 2013 (Section 26-6.5-203, C.R.S.). The commission is required to hold at least **4 meetings** annually, and is charged with studying issues concerning early childhood and school readiness, including but not limited to health care, mental health, parental involvement, family support, child care, and early learning.

The commission consists of **6 members** of the General Assembly:

- 3 members of the Senate; and
- 3 members of the House of Representatives.

The President of the Senate appoints 2 members, 1 of whom serves on the Senate Education Committee and 1 of whom serves on the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. The minority leader of the Senate appoints 1 member who also serves on the Senate Education Committee. The Speaker of the House of Representatives appoints 2 members, 1 of whom serves on the House Education Committee and 1 of whom serves on the House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee. The minority leader of the House of Representatives appoints 1 member who also serves on the House Education Committee. The chair and

vice-chair alternate annually between the two houses. In 2014, the commission was chaired by Representative Pettersen. In 2015, the chair will be appointed by the President of the Senate and the vice-chair will be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The commission is repealed effective July 1, 2018.

Additional Information Required Pursuant to Section 2-3-303.3, C.R.S.

Although the commission already exists in statute, there is no provision for staffing. Therefore, I hereby request staffing provided by Legislative Council Staff during the interim between the 2015 and 2016 legislative sessions.

The commission will need **5 bills** to address the issues it studies.

Nonlegislative members will not have a role in the interim study committee, nor is a task force necessary to assist the commission in studying the scope of policy issues. The following agencies may be called upon to provide assistance or information to the interim study committee: Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Human Services, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, and Colorado Department of Higher Education.

In addition, please see the attached letter (Attachment A) from the Early Childhood Leadership Commission focusing on the relationship between the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and the Early Childhood and School Readiness Legislative Commission.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Early Childhood Leadership Commission
Lt. Governor Garcia, Co-Chair
Barbara Grogan, Co-Chair
Anna Jo Haynes, Co-Chair

1575 Sherman Street Denver, CO 80203
www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com



March 30, 2015

Dear Senate President Cadman and House Speaker Hellinghorst,

The Early Childhood Leadership Commission (ECLC) was reauthorized by legislation in 2013 as the entity charged to be the trusted and proactive champion for quality, outcome-focused early childhood programs and services for pregnant women and children birth to age eight in Colorado. This high-level, interagency, cross-sector, public-private commission accelerates and sustains Colorado's commitment to improve outcomes for young children by promoting a shared vision and strategic direction for an aligned system of services and supports.

Pursuant to C.R.S. 26-6.5-203 (2)(b), the Early Childhood School Readiness Legislative Commission (ECSRLC) is required to consult with the ECLC on matters related to early childhood and school readiness policy. This statute compliments the ECLC's priority, pursuant to C.R.S. 26-6.2-104, to identify opportunities for, and barriers to, the alignment of standards, rules, policies and procedures across programs and agencies that support young children. Out of a commitment to promote robust policy, the ECSRLC and ECLC will continue to meet and collaborate on early childhood and school readiness policy throughout the 2015 interim session.

While leveraging the subject matter expertise of the ECLC and the opportunity for the ECSRLC to shepherd new policy and make recommendations to improve current policy, the ECLC plans to engage the ECSRLC in a discussion to:

- Ensure the implementation of the 2015 Early Childhood Colorado Framework which is scheduled to be released in July 2015
- Review recommendations from the ECLC Prenatal to Age Three Subcommittee
- Analyze options to sustain Colorado Shines which is the new Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) that includes the Professional Development Information System (PDIS)
- Engage and align efforts with the business community which includes a better understanding of the economic impact of early childhood

We look forward to the opportunity to accelerate progress and further strengthen the early childhood system to better serve young children and families in Colorado.

On behalf of the ECLC,

Anna Jo Haynes
ECLC Co-Chair