

HB 1979 (RANEY, PLESA, BUMGARNER)

Relating to the powers and duties of the Texas Workforce Commission and local workforce development boards regarding the provision of child care.



Scope of the Problem

“Workforce Boards are uniquely positioned to support the recruitment, professional development and onboarding of new members of the child care workforce, but in many workforce areas the child care industry has few opportunities to share their specific needs and concerns with their Workforce Board, resulting in Boards that are ill-equipped to support the child care sector in their workforce area.” - TWC’s Child Care Workforce Strategic Plan 2023-2025

The Texas Workforce Commission has 28 Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) that are instrumental in implementing the services and programs funded through federal dollars. Those 28 LWDBs reach every corner of Texas, there continues to be a need to improve consistent supports to child care providers as well as allowing for each LWDB to have the flexibility to meet local needs of families and community. Despite child care accounting for over 80% of their operating budget, LWDBs provide varied levels of services to families, which can result in some families not be able to find easily accessible child care information on their regional LWDB website. Additionally, LWDB leadership sometimes have limited knowledge of the child care ecosystem, which can impact the effectiveness of the strategies they choose to respond to local child care needs. **According to TWC’s Child Care Workforce Strategic Plan 2023-2025, “The Workgroup reports that the lack of standardization across Workforce Boards prevent the child care system from working as effectively as it could in many workforce areas.”**

Families and communities need consistent and easy access to child care supports in order to continue working and thriving.

Policy Recommendations

HB1979 will help provide consistency for families, child care expertise for Local Workforce Development Boards, while supporting Boards’ flexibility to serve children and families in their communities with their child care needs. The bill provides for:

- Increasing data transparency and standardization across LWDBs to ensure that policymakers can answer basic questions about the effectiveness of investments and to help families better understand the services available in their communities.
- Introducing flexible performance targets so that local leadership can effectively address local child care needs.
- Ensuring that Board membership and composition includes leaders with child care expertise to effectively steward the expenditures of taxpayer funds
- Creating consumer-friendly websites that better serve parents and child care providers.

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