

# ECE Legislative Briefing

March 6, 2025

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Texas Association for the  
Education of Young Children

children  
at Risk





**Mandi Kimball**

Chief Government Affairs  
Officer at Children at Risk



**Kim Kofron**

Senior Director  
of Education at Children  
at Risk



**Cody Summerville**

CEO,  
Texas Association for the  
Education of Young  
Children (TXAEYC)

**1 in 10** children in  
America live in Texas

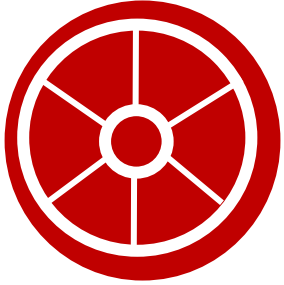
**2.3M** children under the  
age of 6 lives in Texas

**1 in 10** children under 6  
with low-income, working  
parents live in a child  
care desert

children  
atRisk

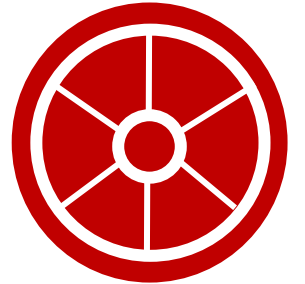


# The Texas Early Childhood Ecosystem

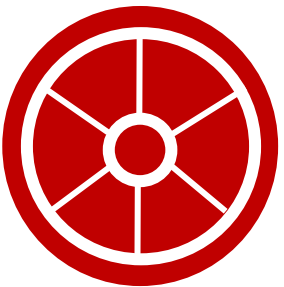


**ACCESS** | 44% of all zip codes in Texas qualify as child care deserts for low-income children, meaning that 3x more children live in the zip code than the number of available child care slots. Children deserve equitable access to safe care that supports their health, learning, and development.

**FAMILIES** | In Texas, caring for an infant and toddler can cost 10-50% of many working families' annual earnings. According to federal recommendations, child care should cost no more than 7% of a family's income. Families need affordable care in their communities to be able to participate in the workforce.



**EDUCATORS** | According to the US Department of Treasury, more than half qualify for at least one form of public assistance. Early Childhood Educators deserve a living wage.



# Texas Child Care Deserts

## Overall Child Care Deserts

**1,065,952**

Total Number of Seats

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**365**

Desert Zip Codes\*

## Subsidy Child Care Deserts

**114,372**

Total Number of Seats

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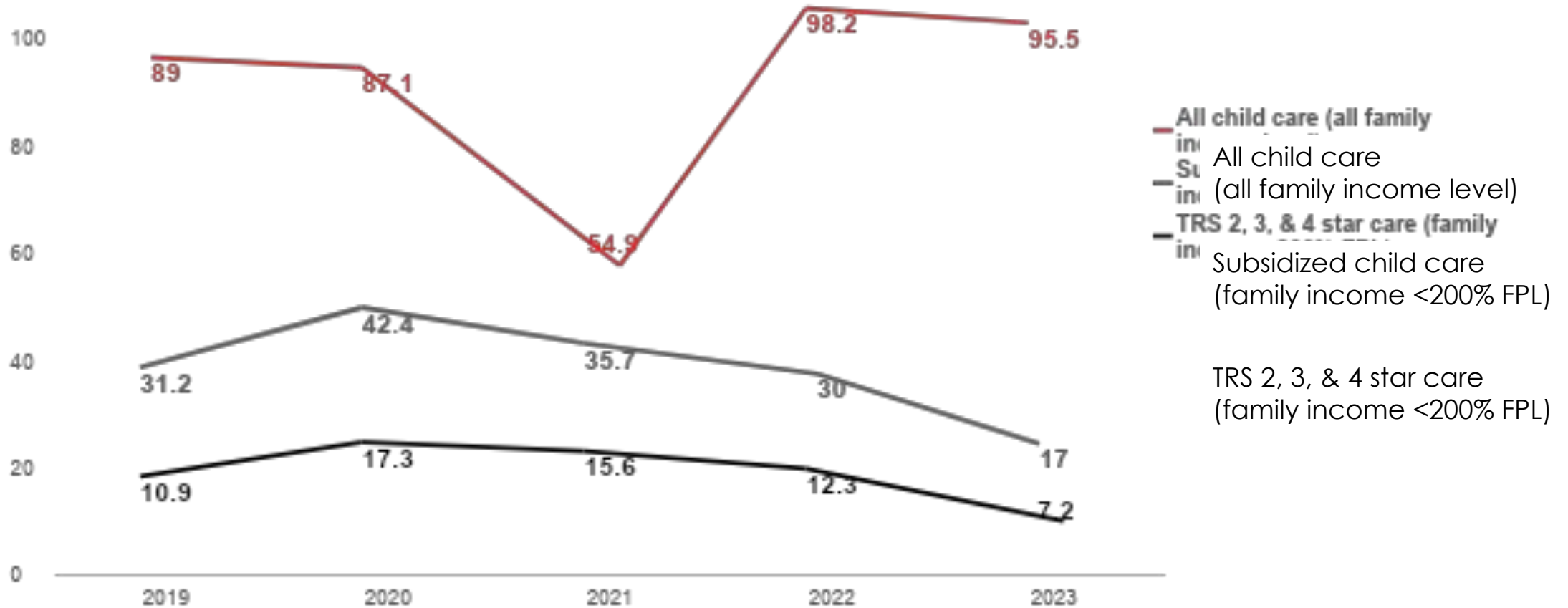
**859**

Subsidy Desert Zip Codes\*

*\*Out of 1,933 total zip codes in Texas*

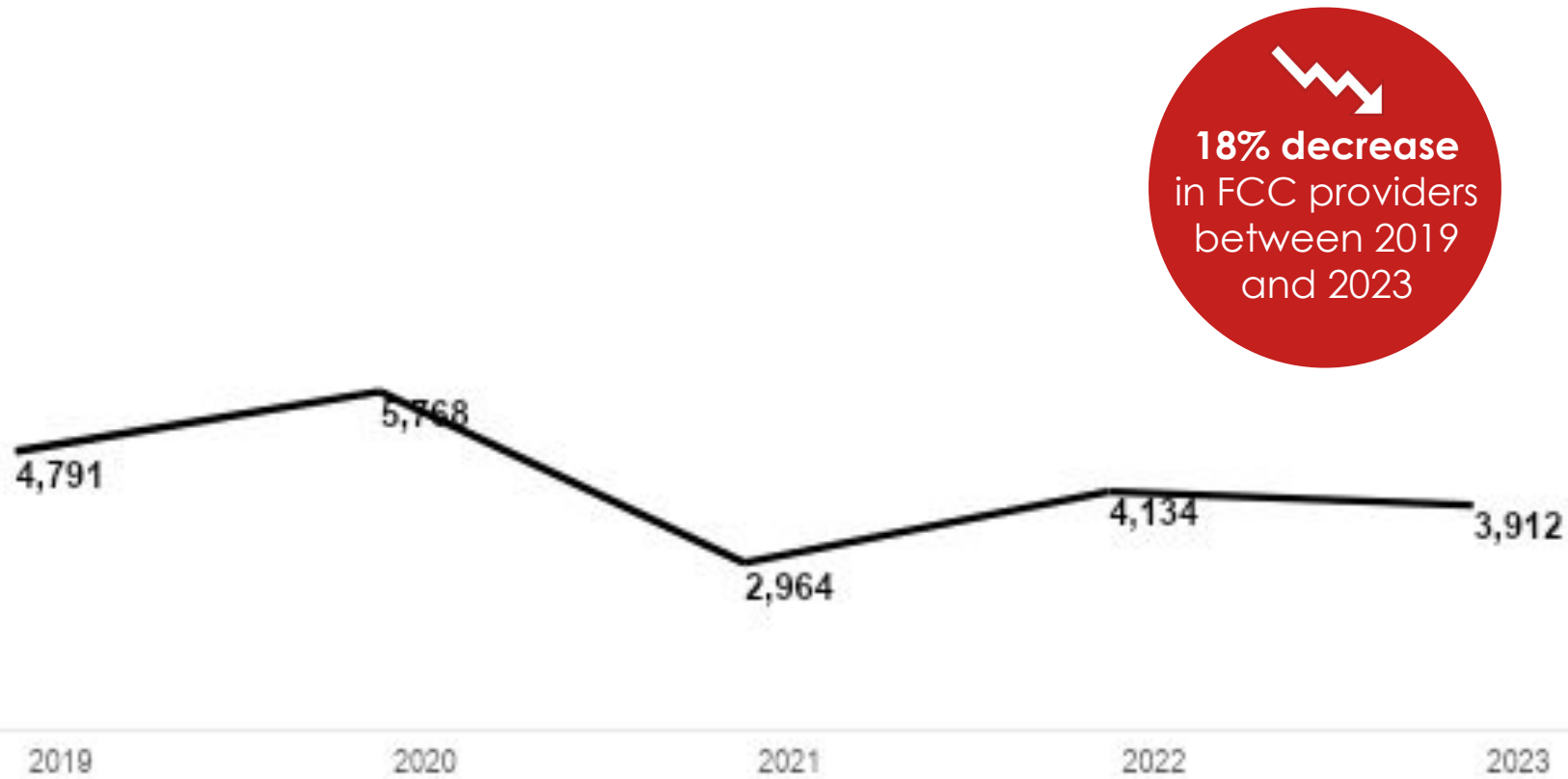
# The Last 5 Years of Child Care Deserts in Texas

## Number of Child Care Seats per 100 Working Families

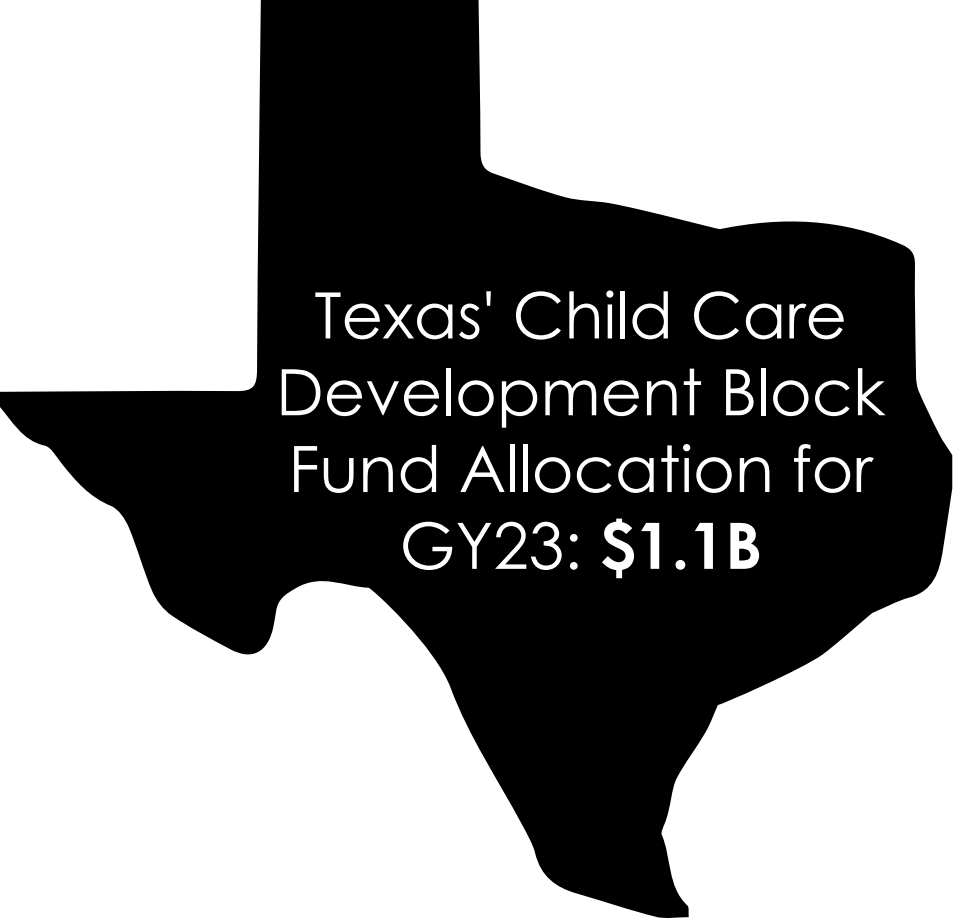


# Family Child Care Homes

Registered and Licensed Family Child Care Homes, 2019-2023



# Child Care Funding



Texas' Child Care  
Development Block  
Fund Allocation for  
GY23: **\$1.1B**

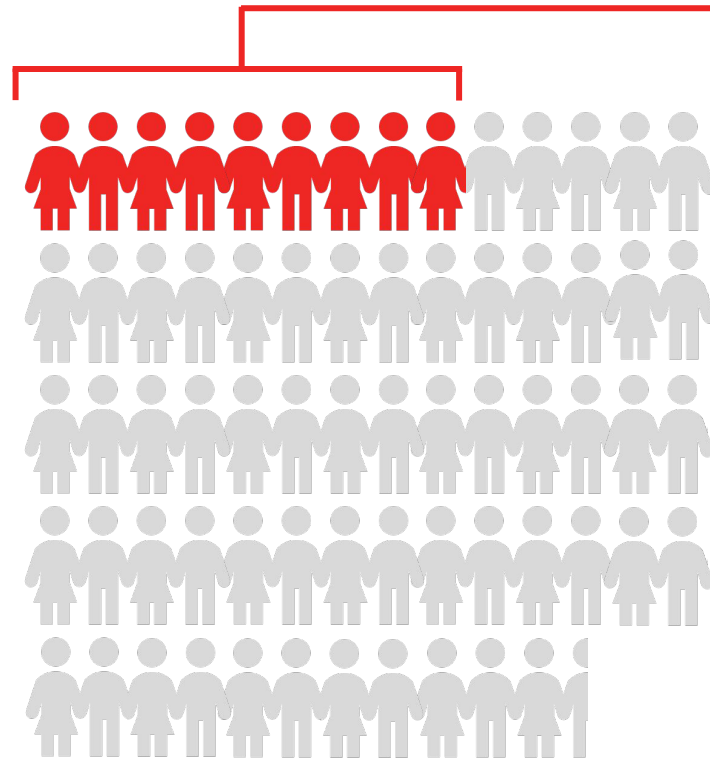
## Federal Rules Require That:

- No less than **70%** of funds can be used for **direct care**;
- No less than **9%** for **quality initiatives**;
- No less than **3%** for **infants & toddlers quality initiatives**; and
- No more than **5%** for **administrative activities**.

## Texas State Match:

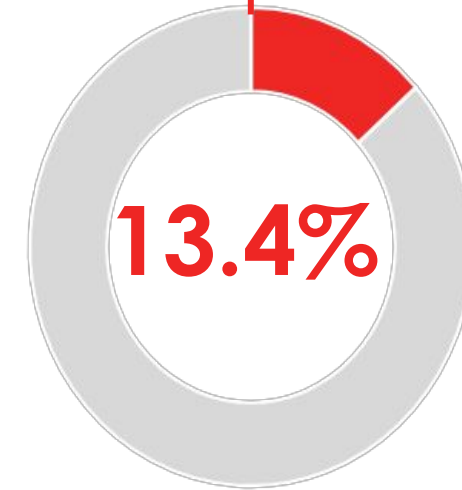
- \$34M (3%)

# Number of Children Served with Funding versus Need



 = 10,000 low-income children ages 0-5 with working parents

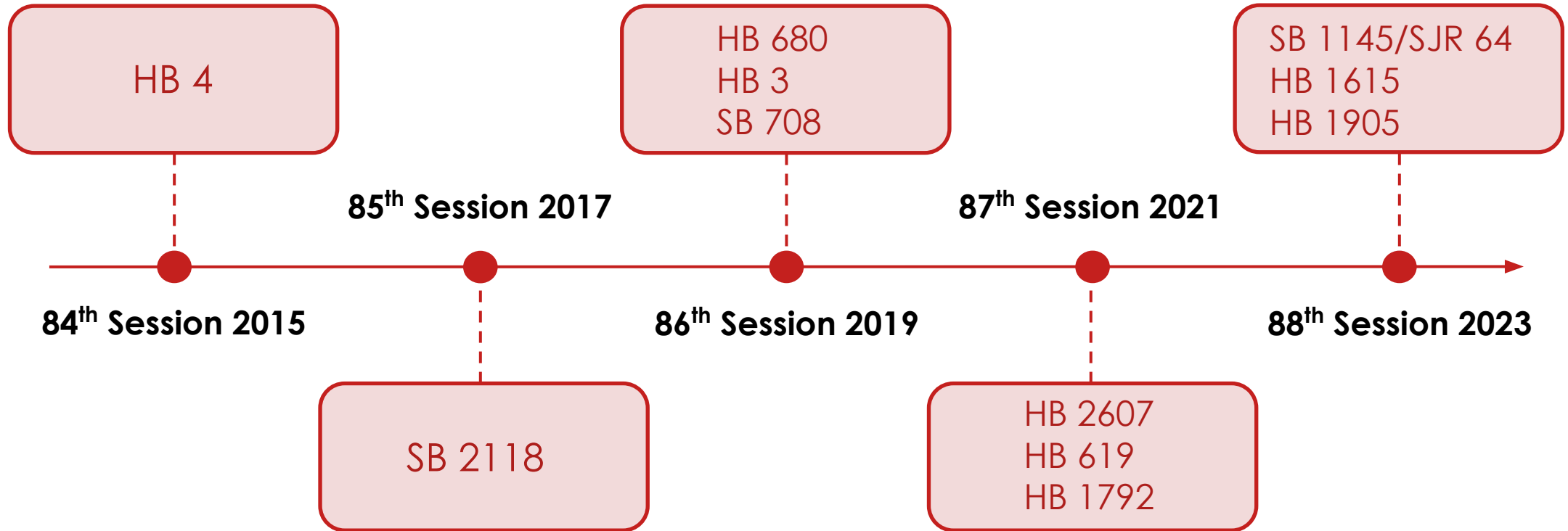
 = children ages 0-5 served by TWC



Just over **one in ten** low-income children ages 0-5 with working parents **receive subsidies for child care.**

# Using Results in Advocacy Work

# A Look Back...



# Interim Charges for the 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature

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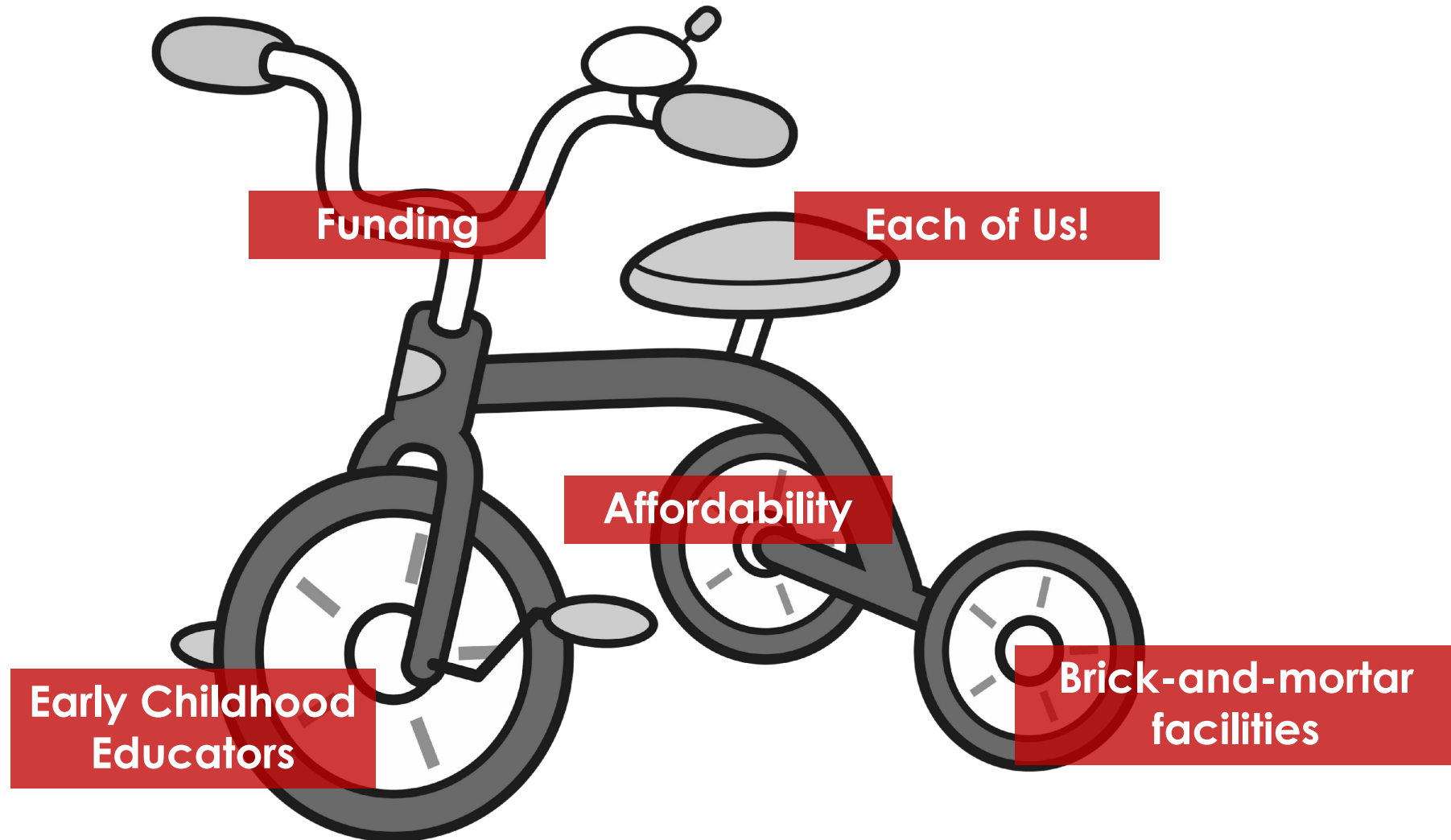
## Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development

- **Enhancing Workforce Productivity:** Study ways to increase the state's workforce productivity, including access to childcare. Make recommendations, within existing resources, to maintain child care availability to support a growing workforce.

## Committee on International Relations & Economic Development

- **Early Childhood Education Industry:** Evaluate the current state of the early childhood education industry. Review current early childhood policies and evaluate their effectiveness, including barriers to enter the Child Care Services program.

# The Trifecta for Success





# WHY IS CHILD CARE SO EXPENSIVE?

*Breaking Down the Actual Cost of Providing Care*



# The Math Doesn't Add Up

- Child care tuition is equivalent to tuition at a public university
- Child care teachers earn between \$11-14/hour and often do not have benefits
- Business model does not yield a profit

*So where is the money going???*

**THE**

**COST OF**

**CHILD CARE**

# Staffing Costs

Position	Hourly Wage	Total
14 Teachers + 1 Floater	\$12/hour (\$25,000 annually)	\$375,000
Assistant Director	\$16.50/hour	\$34,000
Director	\$20/hour	\$41,000
Cook/Janitor	\$10/hour	\$20,8000

**\$525,000**

Total Staff Cost with taxes, benefits,  
and subsitutes

# Expenses

	Total
Staff Costs	\$525,000
Facilities (Rent, Utilities, Maintenance, etc.)	\$160,000
Insurance	\$25,000
Food Cost	\$90,000
Materials and Supplies	\$10,000
Staff Professional Development	\$5,000
Other Costs	\$35,000

**\$850,000**

Total Expenses

**\$9,445**

per child

Total Expenses

**\$850,000**

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**90 Children**

# Loosing Scenarios

## HIGHER WAGES

- Pay teachers \$16/hour
- **\$10,945/child**

## LOWER RATIOS

- Minimum state ratios
- Increase enrollment to 113
- Eliminate 3 teachers
- **\$6,770/child**

**\$9,445**

per child

Total Expenses

**\$850,000**

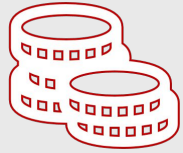
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**90 Children**

## **Staffing Challenges**

**Low wages continue  
to present challenges  
to attracting and  
retaining staff**

# 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature Revenue Neutral Bills



## Invest in child care through:

- Direct Care of Children
- Reimbursement Rates
- Child Care Supply Funding

**-S.B. 972 (Zaffirini)/H.B. 2294 (Thompson)** Allow LWDBs to reimburse providers at the established rate, regardless of their published rates.



**Remove** patchwork of **local regulatory barriers** that burden Texans who want to open **family child care homes**

**-S.B. 599 (West)** Reduce obstacles for the creation of new licensed and registered child care homes.

-Regulations by the **Texas Health and Human Services Commission** ensure child safety.

-However, **local zoning ordinances create unnecessary obstacles** for those wanting to open licensed child care homes.

-This bill would **limit duplicative local regulations**, making it easier to expand child care options.

# 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature Revenue Neutral Bills



Prioritize **income-eligible child care employees** for child care scholarships for **their own children**

## **-S.B. 462 (Kolkhorst)**

Prioritize eligible child care workers for child care scholarships.

- Many child care educators **earn low wages and qualify for child care assistance.**
- This legislation prioritizes **child care workers for child care scholarships**, ensuring their children receive quality care.
- Retaining child care educators is essential for maintaining **a stable and skilled workforce.**

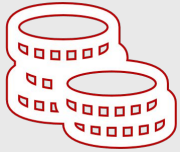


Reduce **administrative obstacles** to develop **public-private Pre-K partnerships**

**-S.B. 1755 (Birdwell)** Under **current law**, high quality child care providers, school districts, charter schools who want to partner must have the **same Certificates of Occupancy**, Schools districts and charter schools have Certificate of Occupancy License E for Education. Child care providers have a Certificate of Occupancy License I for Industry.

**Allow child care providers to use their current Certificate of Occupancy.**

# 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature Fiscal Needs



## Invest in child care

through:

- Direct Care of Children
- Reimbursement Rates
- Child Care Supply Funding



Consider **business tax incentives** for businesses supporting child care for employees

- **95,000 eligible children** remain on a **waitlist**, with some families waiting **up to two years** for assistance.
- Child care costs in Texas average **\$9,672–\$10,608 per year per child**, making it unaffordable for many families. Investing **\$89M in FY 2026** and **\$92M in FY 2027** could serve **10,000 more children** and strengthen Texas' workforce.

- **S.B. 1739 (West)** The creation of a child care protection and enhancement fund for the purpose of the expansion of childcare capacity and enhancement of subsidized child care rates.
- **S.B. 211 (West)** Relating to a franchise tax credit for taxable entities that operate an on-site child-care center for use by the entity's employees.

# Panel Discussion



**Tamitha Blackmon**  
Nehemiah Christian  
School  
Founder/Owner



**Mary Jane Faz**  
Parent  
Red Room Lead Teacher  
St. George's Episcopal  
School



**Audrey Rowland**  
Founder & CEO of Green  
Space Learning &  
Development

# Thank You!

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