



## S.B. 462 (Kolkhorst)

### Child Care for Child Care Educators: Supporting the Workforce without Expanding Eligibility

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Child care is a critical component of the Texas economy. Child care supports working families and improves school readiness. However, the child care industry is struggling financially and often cannot pay competitive wages, creating a severe workforce shortage. Without enough qualified child care educators, providers cannot maximize existing classroom space, leaving children on waitlists and limiting access to care for parents who want and need to work.

Child care educators earn an average wage of just \$12 per hour. As a result, many child care educators are themselves eligible for child care assistance through the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) Child Care Scholarship program. Just like other workers, child care educators cannot work without child care.

SB 462 prioritizes child care educators for scholarship assistance, a cost neutral strategy that keeps educators on the job, helps programs open more classrooms, and serves more working parents across Texas.

#### **Policy Solution: SB 462 (Kolkhorst)**

Senate Bill 462 will designate **eligible child care educators** as a **statewide priority** for TWC's Child Care Scholarship program, ensuring that these essential workers receive assistance across Texas. By increasing the level of prioritization for child care educators:

- More child care workers will have access to affordable care for their own children and will be able to serve the children of other working parents.
- More classrooms will be staffed, allowing providers to serve additional children.
- Families currently on waitlists will have greater access to child care, supporting Texas' broader workforce.
- SB 462 does not have a Fiscal Note and does not expand eligibility for Child Care Scholarships to any working parent not currently eligible for the program.

Addressing the child care workforce shortage is essential for expanding access to quality early childhood education to more working parents. Prioritizing child care educators for scholarships through SB 462 will create a more stable workforce, enabling providers to open classrooms and serve more Texas families. The Legislature has an opportunity to enact a targeted, high-impact, and no cost policy that will strengthen both the child care industry and the Texas economy.

#### **FOR QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS PLEASE CONTACT:**

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