

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 4202
By: Herrero
Human Services
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Recent neurological research confirms that the environment and relationships a child experiences in the first three years lays a foundation that affects the rest of the child's life. It is important that Texas funds programs that foster close and secure relationships with children, such as early child care. Prior to 2001, the federal government established a requirement that a state spend at least four percent of its child care development fund on improving the quality of care at child care facilities. Since establishing the requirement, Texas has reallocated the money in the child care development fund from child care quality initiatives to standard licensing and monitoring activities.

Under current law, all funds that are received from gifts, grants, and donations given with the purpose of funding the enhancement of the child care industry are put into the state's general revenue fund. Thus, due to the commingling of funds, the majority of Texas' child care facilities for infants and toddlers do not currently receive sufficient resources to promote the types of experiences that develop strong interpersonal skills.

H.B. 4202 creates the early child care development account in the general revenue fund and authorizes the account to be appropriated only to the Department of Family and Protective Services to promote continuing education for certain child care providers and for reasonable administrative expenses relating to the regulation of certain facilities, homes, and agencies that provide child care services.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 4202 amends the Human Resources Code to create the early child care development account in the general revenue fund and authorizes the account to be appropriated only to the Department of Family and Protective Services to support continuing education initiatives for certain child care providers and for reasonable administrative expenses relating to the regulation of certain facilities, homes, and agencies that provide child care services.

H.B. 4202 provides for the funds to be deposited into the account and exempts the account from the application of law relating to the use of dedicated revenue in the treasury.

H.B. 4202 establishes the account's purpose is to support continuing education initiatives that implement infant and toddler child care best practices for caregivers of children from birth to age three, promote the development of secure, consistent, responsive relationships and attachments between child care workers and the infants and toddlers in their care, and provide training and knowledge on the importance of the emotional development of infants and toddlers.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.