By:  Dutton H.B. No. 940

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the private child care task force.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  (a) In this section, "task force" means the private child care task force.

(b)  The private child care task force is established to study private child care providers in this state and methods to:

(1)  reduce the amounts charged for high-quality child care provided by private child care providers;

(2)  increase the availability of high-quality child care provided by private child care providers;

(3)  address issues with wait lists for scholarships to receive high-quality child care; and

(4)  increase the number of families who are able to receive high-quality child care.

(c)  The task force is composed of seven members appointed as follows:

(1)  one member appointed by the governor to represent the governor;

(2)  three members of the senate, appointed by the lieutenant governor; and

(3)  three members of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.

(d)  A task force member is not entitled to compensation for service on the task force but is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing task force duties. The task force may accept gifts, grants, and donations to pay for those expenses.

(e)  The member appointed by the governor shall serve as the presiding officer of the task force.

(f)  The task force shall meet at least quarterly at the call of the presiding officer.

(g)  Notwithstanding Chapter 551, Government Code, or any other law, the task force may meet by telephone conference call, videoconference, or other similar telecommunication method. A meeting held by telephone conference call, videoconference, or other similar telecommunication method is subject to the requirements of Sections 551.125(c), (d), (e), and (f), Government Code.

(h)  The task force shall conduct a study to examine:

(1)  the amounts charged for high-quality child care provided by private child care providers;

(2)  the availability of high-quality child care provided by private child care providers;

(3)  wait lists for scholarships to receive high-quality child care;

(4)  methods to reduce the cost to families and increase the availability of high-quality child care;

(5)  strategies to increase the number of prekindergarten partnerships between independent school districts and high-quality child care programs; and

(6)  methods to strengthen the child care industry.

(i)  The task force may request relevant information from the Health and Human Services Commission, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the Texas Education Agency, and the entity receiving the request shall comply with the request.

(j)  The task force shall develop recommendations to reduce the amounts charged for and increase the availability of high-quality child care by private child care providers and of prekindergarten partnerships.

(k)  The task force shall develop and submit a written report on the study and recommendations developed by the task force to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and each member of the legislature not later than November 1, 2024.

(l)  The task force is abolished and this Act expires June 1, 2024.

SECTION 2.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2023.