

SB 446-FN-A - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

03/31/2022 1125s

2022 SESSION

22-3049

07/05

SENATE BILL **446-FN-A**

AN ACT directing the department of health and human services to develop a plan relative to fostering sustainable childcare opportunities for working families and businesses.

SPONSORS: Sen. Whitley, Dist 15; Sen. Hennessey, Dist 1; Sen. Rosenwald, Dist 13; Sen. Soucy, Dist 18; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Carson, Dist 14; Sen. Kahn, Dist 10; Sen. Cavanaugh, Dist 16; Sen. Sherman, Dist 24; Sen. Perkins Kwoka, Dist 21; Sen. Prentiss, Dist 5; Sen. D'Allesandro, Dist 20; Rep. Wallner, Merr. 10; Rep. McWilliams, Merr. 27; Rep. Rombeau, Hills. 7

COMMITTEE: Health and Human Services

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AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill directs the department of health and human services, in consultation with the child care advisory council, to submit a plan to the governor, the speaker of the house, the senate president, and the governor's office for economic relief and recovery relative to fostering sustainable childcare opportunities within the state.

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Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]  
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

## STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Two*

AN ACT directing the department of health and human services to develop a plan relative to fostering sustainable childcare opportunities for working families and businesses.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 1 Statement of Findings and Purpose.

2 I. Industries rely on a stable and qualified workforce. Many industries in the granite state  
3 are struggling to recruit and retain their workforce in these unprecedented times. Child care  
4 businesses are no different. What is different is that the child care industry employs the workforce  
5 behind the workforce, allowing employees from other industries to be and stay on the job. When  
6 child care businesses cannot recruit and retain employees, classrooms and programs close down,  
7 resulting in fewer child care spaces for the children of New Hampshire's labor force, resulting in  
8 employees having to resign or turn down job offers across all industries.

9 II. The child care industry is also unique in its dual role of supporting the workforce of today  
10 while preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

11 III. Another unique aspect of the child care workforce is that young children in their care  
12 often experience turnover as loss when their beloved teacher leaves. The legislature should do all it  
13 can to ensure that does not happen too often in the life of a child.

14 IV. In May 2021, the director of the New Hampshire economic and labor market information  
15 bureau reported that "increasing the labor force participation rate of women ages 25-54 by just 1.3  
16 percent (10,000) through increased access to child care would add over \$1 billion to New  
17 Hampshire's gross domestic product by 2031 and over \$1.5 billion in personal income."

18 V. In May 2020, the bipartisan legislative advisory board of governor's office for emergency  
19 relief and recovery stated, "as we begin reopening our economy, the biggest impediment to getting  
20 people back to work is access to safe, reliable, and affordable childcare."

21 VI. Addressing the current child care workforce shortage is key to New Hampshire's  
22 economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and will provide critical infrastructure for parents  
23 to work or to pursue training or education while their child is in an affordable, safe, nurturing and  
24 educationally-enriching environment.

25 VII. The purpose of this act is to advance solutions to stabilize New Hampshire's child care  
26 workforce, which benefits all industries, working families, and the children and youth in their care.

27 2 Child Care Workforce Initiative. The department of health and human services, in  
28 consultation with the advisory council on child care established in RSA 126-A:17, shall develop a  
29 plan to submit to the governor's office for economic relief and recovery by June 30, 2022 to help

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1 foster sustainable childcare opportunities for working families and businesses. Such a plan shall  
2 focus on strategies to rapidly increase recruitment and retention of staffing at child care facilities,  
3 including consideration of recruitment and retention bonus and benefit grants for certain New  
4 Hampshire child care employers, strategies to ensure a future workforce, costs for facilities, and  
5 strategies to increase access and affordability of child care for families statewide. The plan shall also  
6 be submitted to the governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the president of the  
7 senate.

8       3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

**SB 446-FN-A- FISCAL NOTE  
 AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT establishing a child care workforce fund and grant program and making an appropriation therefor.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**     State             County             Local             None

STATE:	Estimated Increase / (Decrease)			
	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
<b>Appropriation</b>	\$0	\$8,950,700	\$0	\$0
<b>Revenue</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Expenditures</b>	\$0	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase
<b>Funding Source:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Highway	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

**METHODOLOGY:**

This bill establishes a child care workforce fund, to be administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, dedicated to financing recruitment and retention bonuses and benefits for eligible NH child care employers. The fund is to be nonlapsing and continually appropriated, and the bill makes an appropriation of \$8,950,700 in FY23. To the extent such funds are available, the appropriation is to be made from federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, with the remainder appropriated from the state general fund. The bill allows for 10 percent of the annually allocated funds to be used for the cost of program administration, with the remainder used to provide grants to eligible child care programs. The Department did not provide information on the expected cost of program administration.

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:**

Department of Health and Human Services