

SB 1040 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Labor and Business

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Meeting Dates: 3/16, 3/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Early Learning and Care to conduct study on increasing availability of child care. Requires report to Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2024. Sunsets on January 2, 2025.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Replaces the measure. Defines "micro center." Directs Department of Early Learning and Care (Department) to create pilot program to develop a sustainable model for micro centers to provide affordable, high quality learning opportunities in Oregon. Requires Department to select three child care facilities to participate in pilot project and specifies criteria for selection of the facilities. Specifies minimum pilot program requirements that Department must develop. Directs Department to submit report on implementation of pilot program to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2025. Sunsets January 2, 2026. Declares emergency, takes effect July 1, 2023.

BACKGROUND:

In 2021, the Legislative Assembly enacted House Bill 3073. HB 3073 created the Department of Early Learning and Care (Department) and made changes to the Employment Related Day Care Program (ERDC). The Department is currently scheduled to be established on July 1, 2023. The Department is intended to expand and strengthen early learning systems in Oregon. Currently, the ERDC is housed within the Oregon Department of Human Services but will transfer to the Department by July 1, 2023. The ERDC is a subsidy program that helps working families pay for child care and helps families find child care.

Studies show that Oregon has a lack of child care, what is also known as child care deserts. A study by the Oregon Early Learning division, titled Oregon's Child Care Desserts 2020: Mapping Supply by Age Group and Percentage of Publicly Funded Slots, defined these "deserts" as having more than three children per regulated child care slot by county. This study found that as of March 1, 2020, every county is a child care desert for families with infants and toddlers and that 25 counties are child care deserts for families with preschool-age children.

Senate Bill 1040 directs the Department of Early Learning and Care to conduct a study on increasing the availability of child care.