

A-Engrossed
House Bill 2991

Ordered by the House April 5
Including House Amendments dated April 5

Sponsored by Representative TRAN; Representatives HUDSON, NGUYEN H, PHAM K (Presession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

Directs Department of Early Learning and Care to commission independent study regarding barriers to attaining high quality early childhood workforce. **Requires department to adopt rules that address barriers that impede entry into early childhood workforce by early childhood professionals, no later than December 31, 2024.**

Requires department to submit reports to interim committees of Legislative Assembly related to early learning and care on results of study and recommendations for legislation.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to enhancing access to jobs in the early childhood workforce; and declaring an emergency.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1. (1) The Department of Early Learning and Care shall commission an inde-**
5 **pendent study to identify barriers to a high quality early childhood workforce, including in-**
6 **efficiencies that may exist within the statewide professional recognition database that**
7 **records licensing and training of early childhood professionals, and to provide guidance for**
8 **future professional development specific to the needs of the early childhood workforce in**
9 **Oregon. In selecting an entity to conduct the independent study, the department shall pri-**
10 **oritize either of the following entities that demonstrate experience in applied policy research**
11 **and analysis and subject matter expertise regarding matters related to early learning:**

12 (a) **Community-based nonprofit organizations.**

13 (b) **Firms that have received a certification issued by the Certification Office for Business**
14 **Inclusion and Diversity.**

15 (2) **At a minimum, the study shall:**

16 (a) **Examine barriers and inefficiencies within the existing early childhood workforce**
17 **registry.**

18 (b) **Evaluate challenges faced by current and prospective early childhood professionals.**

19 (c) **Review the active efforts that are in place, if any, that promote increased accessibility**
20 **and transferability of community college credits across post-secondary institutions.**

21 (d) **Consider possible accreditation processes for transferring international college credits**
22 **related to early childhood and child development.**

23 (e) **Explore career pathways developed or implemented by entities, including but not**
24 **limited to community colleges and community-based organizations, that have successfully**
25 **reduced inefficiencies and barriers for individuals seeking apprenticeships, on-the-job train-**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 ing and other professional training that lead to employment in occupations related to early
2 childhood.

3 (3) The department shall convene a stakeholder group to review the findings from the
4 study and provide recommendations for:

5 (a) Strategies to attain more equitable compensation for the early childhood workforce.

6 (b) Creating a career pipeline for the early childhood workforce that increases opportu-
7 nities for education, training and credentialing.

8 (c) The content of administrative rules adopted by the department under subsection (4)
9 of this section.

10 (4) No later than December 31, 2024, the department shall adopt rules that address bar-
11 riers that impede entry into the early childhood workforce by early childhood professionals.
12 At a minimum, the rules must simplify and eliminate administrative inefficiencies that exist
13 within the early childhood workforce registry by:

14 (a) Establishing consistent standards for assessing the professional qualifications and
15 academic experience of early childhood professionals for purposes of determining the appro-
16 priate worker classifications and pay rates for such professionals.

17 (b) Streamlining the processes used to verify or accredit the out-of-state professional or
18 academic credentials of an early childhood professional to determine whether those creden-
19 tials count towards qualifications that are specific to the early childhood workforce in
20 Oregon.

21 (c) Providing a foreign language translation feature within the early childhood workforce
22 registry for early childhood professionals to translate relevant documents free of charge.

23 (d) Establishing standards and processes by which an early childhood professional may
24 provide consent to a hiring agency to access the professional's workforce registry account
25 to provide technical assistance to the professional.

26 (5) The department shall prepare and submit reports in the manner provided under ORS
27 192.245, and may include recommendations for legislation, to the interim committees of the
28 Legislative Assembly related to early learning and care as follows:

29 (a) The first report must be submitted no later than September 15, 2024, and must be a
30 preliminary report that summarizes the findings of the study.

31 (b) The second report must be submitted no later than December 31, 2024, and must
32 provide comprehensive evaluations on the findings of the study and include any recommen-
33 dations for legislation based on the results of the study.

34 **SECTION 2.** Section 1 of this 2023 Act is repealed on January 2, 2025.

35 **SECTION 3.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
36 ated to the Department of Early Learning and Care, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023,
37 out of the General Fund, the amount of \$300,000, to carry out the provisions of section 1 of
38 this 2023 Act.

39 **SECTION 4.** This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
40 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect
41 on its passage.