

HCS HB 387 -- QUALITY RATING SYSTEM FOR CHILD CARE FACILITIES

SPONSOR: Wallace (Cooper)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 11 to 1.

This substitute requires the Department of Social Services, in collaboration with the departments of Health and Senior Services, Elementary and Secondary Education, and Mental Health, to develop by September 1, 2009, a quality rating system for early childhood and before- and after-school programs that are licensed by the Department of Health and Senior Services. The Department of Social Services must use the model developed by the University of Missouri Center for Family Policy and Research to establish the rating system. The rating system will allow evaluation and selection of high-quality programs, create an accountability system for policymakers and funders, and guide providers through a system of increasing levels of quality with specific outcomes for child care.

By July 1, 2014, subject to appropriations, all licensed facilities receiving direct moneys or services must be rated under the system; the program remains voluntary for other licensed facilities. The Coordinating Board for Early Childhood within the Children's Services Commission must develop a plan for a tiered rating system of reimbursement for child care subsidies based on the rating system for licensed facilities that receive funding or services to improve the quality of their programs. By December 31, 2010, a proposed plan with recommendations for implementation of the reimbursement system must be submitted to the General Assembly. The plan will become effective upon authorization by the General Assembly.

The substitute creates the Quality Rating System Program Improvement Fund administered by the Department of Social Services to provide grants to licensed providers to make quality improvements to comply with the rating system or to community-based organizations assisting providers with the improvements. The funds will be administered by the department through contracts with nongovernmental organizations, which will provide the quality improvement services of training and technical assistance directly to programs statewide and establish a quality improvement panel to review grant applications and determine funding. Grants must be awarded in a geographically diverse manner.

The Department of Social Services, in collaboration with the departments of Health and Senior Services, Mental Health, and

Elementary and Secondary Education, will be responsible for collecting, developing, and distributing materials to educate the public and early childhood and before- and after-school programs about the quality rating system and posting the ratings on the Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network web site by December 31, 2014.

The provisions regarding the child care quality rating system will expire six years from the effective date.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of Unknown but Greater than \$759,911 in FY 2010, Unknown but Greater than \$3,432,115 in FY 2011, and Unknown but Greater than \$5,149,796 in FY 2012. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that a rating system will help parents find the best value for their money. The rating system will provide a ladder for caregivers to improve services incrementally.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Cooper; Kathy Thornburg; Meg Bartlett, Mary Lee Johnston Community Learning Center; Carol Scott, Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network; Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce; Citizens for Missouri's Children; Missouri National Education Association; Missouri Association for Community Action; Missouri State Teachers Association; Missouri Federation of Teachers and School Related Personnel; Missouri Municipal League; and Partnership for Children.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.