

Second Regular Session  
Seventy-fifth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 26-0494.01 Anna Petrini x5497

SENATE BILL 26-020

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SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Bright and Ball,

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Sirota,

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Senate Committees  
Education

House Committees

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A BILL FOR AN ACT

101      **CONCERNING MEASURES RELATED TO CHILD CARE PROVIDER**  
102              **LICENSING, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, EXPANDING THE**  
103              **USE OF A DIGITAL FILE SYSTEM, INCREASING RELIANCE ON**  
104              **TRAINED PERSONNEL FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY**  
105              **CHILDHOOD FOR INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS, IMPOSING**  
106              **CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH REGULATION BY**  
107              **LOCAL GOVERNING AUTHORITIES, AND CREATING A TASK**  
108              **FORCE.**

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Bill Summary

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at*

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.  
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.*

<http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill requires the department of early childhood (department) to make reasonable efforts to expand and standardize the use of a digital data platform as a centralized digital file system for certain child care provider information (digital provider file system). The digital provider file system must integrate the professional development information system currently administered by the department and must house records related to staff background checks and child care provider policy documents, consistent with applicable privacy protections.

Current law permits the department to authorize or contract with a third party to investigate and inspect a facility applying for certain types of child care licenses. The bill requires the department, on or before July 1, 2026, to begin phasing out its reliance on third parties where feasible and to prioritize the use of department personnel to conduct the investigations and inspections instead. The department shall establish standardized training, protocols, and supervision for department personnel and authorized or contracted third parties.

The bill permits the department to grant a provisional license for up to 9 months to a child care facility that has satisfied all state-level licensing standards pending resolution of a delay or dispute with a statutory or home rule city, town, city and county, or county where the facility is situated (local governing authority) that prevents compliance with applicable zoning and land use development regulations. A local governing authority that imposes requirements related to the inspection, permitting, licensing, or approval of a child care center or family child care home beyond the state-level licensing standards (local approval process) shall prioritize provisionally licensed child care facilities so that the local approval process concludes within 9 months, and limit, or, in certain cases, provide exemptions from, associated fees.

The bill creates the child care licensure and quality task force (task force) to study and report on recommendations for a streamlined and easy-to-use child care licensure and quality system in the state (study). The task force shall report on its findings and recommendations before January 1, 2027, to the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate, the governor, and the department. The performance of the study is dependent upon the task force's receipt of sufficient gifts, grants, and donations.

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1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 26.5-5-333 as  
3 follows:

1                   **26.5-5-333. Digital provider file system - rules.**

2                   (1) (a) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MAKE REASONABLE EFFORTS TO  
3                   EXPAND AND STANDARDIZE THE USE OF A DIGITAL DATA PLATFORM AS A  
4                   CENTRALIZED DIGITAL FILE SYSTEM FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDER  
5                   INFORMATION AS SPECIFIED IN THIS SECTION. THE DIGITAL PROVIDER FILE  
6                   SYSTEM MUST INTEGRATE THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
7                   INFORMATION SYSTEM ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT PURSUANT TO  
8                   SECTION 26.5-1-106 (1)(a)(I).

9                   (b) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MAKE REASONABLE EFFORTS TO  
10                  TRAIN A LICENSING SPECIALIST EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT OR AN  
11                  ENTITY AUTHORIZED OR CONTRACTED TO PERFORM AN INVESTIGATION OR  
12                  INSPECTION PURSUANT TO SECTION 26.5-5-316 (3) TO USE THE DIGITAL  
13                  PROVIDER FILE SYSTEM.

14                (2) THE DIGITAL PROVIDER FILE SYSTEM MUST BE USED TO STORE  
15                AND MANAGE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE PRIVACY  
16                PROTECTIONS AND THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FEDERAL "CHILD CARE AND  
17                DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014", 42 U.S.C. SEC. 9858,  
18                LICENSING AND COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTATION THAT THE DEPARTMENT  
19                COMMONLY REQUESTS FROM CHILD CARE CENTERS AND FAMILY CHILD  
20                CARE HOMES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

21                (a) RECORDS RELATED TO STAFF TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL  
22                DEVELOPMENT, QUALIFICATIONS, AND CREDENTIALS, INCLUDING  
23                RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT'S VOLUNTARY  
24                CREDENTIALING SYSTEM DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO SECTION 26.5-6-102;

25                (b) RECORDS PERTAINING TO CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS  
26                REQUIRED PURSUANT TO SECTION 26.5-5-316; AND

27                (c) CHILD CARE PROVIDER POLICIES, INCLUDING THE CONTENTS OF

1 PARENT HANDBOOKS, AND RELATED DOCUMENTATION, BUT EXCLUDING  
2 RECORDS PERTAINING TO THE ADMISSION, PROGRESS, HEALTH, AND  
3 DISCHARGE OF CHILDREN UNDER THE CARE OF A FACILITY; RECORDS  
4 PROTECTED PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL "HEALTH INSURANCE  
5 PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996", 42 U.S.C. SEC. 1320d;  
6 AND RECORDS PROTECTED PURSUANT TO OTHER FEDERAL OR STATE  
7 PRIVACY LAWS.

8 (3) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL REQUIRE A LICENSING SPECIALIST  
9 EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT OR AN ENTITY AUTHORIZED OR  
10 CONTRACTED TO PERFORM AN INVESTIGATION OR INSPECTION PURSUANT  
11 TO SECTION 26.5-5-316 (3) TO USE THE DIGITAL PROVIDER FILE SYSTEM TO  
12 THE MAXIMUM EXTENT PRACTICABLE, CONSISTENT WITH APPLICABLE  
13 FEDERAL AND STATE PRIVACY PROTECTIONS, TO REDUCE RELIANCE ON  
14 DUPLICATIVE PAPER DOCUMENTATION DURING AN ANNUAL LICENSING  
15 INSPECTION CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO THIS PART 3.

16 (4) LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS AND FAMILY CHILD CARE  
17 HOMES ARE NOT REQUIRED TO SUBMIT OR PRODUCE THE SAME LICENSING  
18 AND COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTATION MULTIPLE TIMES IF THE INFORMATION  
19 IS ALREADY INCLUDED IN THE DIGITAL PROVIDER FILE SYSTEM.

20 (5) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2026, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
21 SHALL ADOPT RULES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION,  
22 INCLUDING NOTIFYING LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS AND FAMILY CHILD  
23 CARE HOMES ABOUT THE PROCESS FOR UPLOADING SPECIFIC RECORDS TO  
24 AND THE TIMELINE FOR EXPANDING THE USE OF THE CENTRALIZED DIGITAL  
25 PROVIDER SYSTEM AND REQUIREMENTS FOR STANDARDIZING AND  
26 UPDATING ITS CONTENTS.

27 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 26.5-5-316, **amend**

1 (3)(a)(I); and **add** (3)(a)(III) and (3)(a)(IV) as follows:

2 **26.5-5-316. Investigations and inspections - local authority -**  
3 **reports - rules.**

4 (3) (a) (I) Except as otherwise provided in ~~subsection (3)(a)(II)~~  
5 SUBSECTIONS (3)(a)(II) AND (3)(a)(III) of this section, the department may  
6 authorize or contract with any county department, the county department  
7 of health, or any other publicly or privately operated organization that has  
8 a declared interest in children and experience working with children or on  
9 behalf of children to investigate and inspect the facilities applying for an  
10 original or renewal license or applying for a permanent license following  
11 the issuance of a probationary or provisional license ~~under~~ PURSUANT TO  
12 this part 3 and may accept reports on ~~such~~ investigations and inspections  
13 from ~~such~~ THE agencies or organizations as a basis for ~~such~~ licensing  
14 MAKING LICENSING DECISIONS. When contracting for investigations and  
15 inspections, the department shall assure that the contractor is qualified by  
16 training and experience and has no conflict of interest with respect to the  
17 facilities to be inspected.

18 (III) NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTION (3)(a)(I) OF THIS SECTION,  
19 ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2026, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL, WHERE FEASIBLE,  
20 BEGIN PHASING OUT ITS RELIANCE ON PERSONS AUTHORIZED OR  
21 CONTRACTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (3)(a)(I) OF THIS SECTION TO  
22 INVESTIGATE AND INSPECT THE FACILITIES APPLYING FOR AN ORIGINAL OR  
23 RENEWAL LICENSE OR APPLYING FOR A PERMANENT LICENSE FOLLOWING  
24 THE ISSUANCE OF A PROBATIONARY OR PROVISIONAL LICENSE PURSUANT  
25 TO THIS PART 3, AND SHALL PRIORITIZE THE USE OF LICENSING SPECIALISTS  
26 EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO CONDUCT THE INVESTIGATIONS AND  
27 INSPECTIONS INSTEAD.

1 (IV) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH STANDARDIZED  
2 TRAINING, PROTOCOLS, AND SUPERVISION FOR DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL  
3 AND ANY PERSONS AUTHORIZED OR CONTRACTED PURSUANT TO  
4 SUBSECTION (3)(a)(I) OF THIS SECTION TO PROMOTE CONSISTENCY IN THE  
5 INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION OF LICENSING REQUIREMENTS AND THE  
6 STANDARDIZATION OF INVESTIGATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS  
7 ACROSS THE STATE.

8 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 26.5-5-310, **add**  
9 (1)(c) and (4) as follows:

10 **26.5-5-310. Compliance with local government zoning**  
11 **regulations - notice to local governments - provisional licensure -**  
12 **rules.**

13 (1)(c) NOTWITHSTANDING SUBSECTION (1)(a) OF THIS SECTION TO  
14 THE CONTRARY, THE AVAILABILITY OF SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND LICENSED  
15 FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES AND LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS IS A  
16 MATTER OF STATEWIDE CONCERN. THEREFORE, PERMITTING FRAGMENTED  
17 REGULATION AMONG JURISDICTIONS IMPEDES AND INFRINGES UPON THE  
18 DEPARTMENT'S APPROPRIATE AND CONSISTENT LICENSING AND  
19 REGULATION OF FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES AND CHILD CARE CENTERS  
20 THROUGHOUT THE STATE. ACCORDINGLY, A LOCAL GOVERNING  
21 AUTHORITY THAT IMPOSES REQUIREMENTS IN ADDITION TO THE  
22 STATE-LEVEL LICENSING STANDARDS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THIS PART  
23 3 RELATED TO THE INSPECTION, PERMITTING, LICENSING, OR APPROVAL OF  
24 A CHILD CARE CENTER OR FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME SHALL:

25 (I) PRIORITIZE THE INSPECTION, PERMITTING, LICENSING, OR  
26 APPROVAL PROCESS OF A CHILD CARE CENTER OR FAMILY CHILD CARE  
27 HOME THAT HAS BEEN GRANTED A PROVISIONAL LICENSE PURSUANT TO

1 SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION SO THAT THE INSPECTION, PERMITTING,  
2 LICENSING, OR APPROVAL PROCESS IS COMPLETED WITHIN NINE MONTHS;

3 (II) LIMIT, TO A REASONABLE MAXIMUM ESTABLISHED BY  
4 DEPARTMENT RULE, THE FEES ASSOCIATED WITH ANY INSPECTION, PERMIT,  
5 LICENSE, OR APPROVAL THAT IS REQUIRED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNING  
6 AUTHORITY BUT THAT IS NOT REQUIRED BY THE STATE-LEVEL LICENSING  
7 STANDARDS ESTABLISHED IN THIS PART 3; AND

8 (III) EXEMPT FROM THE FEES SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (1)(c)(II)  
9 OF THIS SECTION A CHILD CARE PROVIDER:

10 (A) SERVING INFANTS AND TODDLERS;

11 (B) SERVING FAMILIES THAT ARE ELIGIBLE FOR TEMPORARY  
12 ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES OR FOR SUBSIDIES THROUGH THE  
13 COLORADO CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PURSUANT TO PART 1 OF  
14 ARTICLE 4 OF THIS TITLE 26.5; OR

15 (C) OPENING A CHILD CARE FACILITY IN A COMMUNITY OR AREA  
16 OF THE STATE THAT IS A CHILD CARE DESERT, WHERE THERE ARE MORE  
17 THAN THREE CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OLD FOR EACH AVAILABLE  
18 CHILD CARE SLOT.

19 (4) NOTWITHSTANDING THE REQUIREMENT IN SUBSECTION (1)(a)  
20 OF THIS SECTION, IN THE EVENT THAT A CHILD CARE FACILITY HAS  
21 SATISFIED ALL STATE-LEVEL LICENSING STANDARDS REQUIRED PURSUANT  
22 TO THIS PART 3 BUT A DELAY OR DISPUTE BETWEEN THE CHILD CARE  
23 FACILITY AND THE STATUTORY OR HOME RULE CITY, TOWN, CITY AND  
24 COUNTY, OR COUNTY WHERE THE FACILITY IS SITUATED PREVENTS  
25 COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE ZONING AND LAND USE DEVELOPMENT  
26 REGULATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (1)(a) OF THIS SECTION,  
27 THE DEPARTMENT MAY GRANT A PROVISIONAL LICENSE FOR UP TO NINE

1 MONTHS TO THE CHILD CARE FACILITY PENDING RESOLUTION OF THE  
2 DELAY OR DISPUTE.

3 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 26.5-5-322.5 as  
4 follows:

5 **26.5-5-322.5. Child care licensure and quality task force -**  
6 **created - membership - reporting - repeal.**

7 (1) (a) THE CHILD CARE LICENSURE AND QUALITY TASK FORCE IS  
8 CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT TO STUDY AND DEVELOP  
9 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW, STREAMLINED, EFFICIENT, AND  
10 EASY-TO-USE CHILD CARE LICENSURE AND QUALITY SYSTEM IN  
11 COLORADO.

12 (b) THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE MUST BE GROUNDED IN THE  
13 PRINCIPLE THAT ALL LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS AND FAMILY CHILD  
14 CARE HOMES MEETING STANDARDS FOR PROTECTING CHILD HEALTH, LIFE,  
15 AND SAFETY ARE PROVIDING QUALITY CARE, AND THAT ADDITIONAL  
16 QUALITY ENHANCEMENT EFFORTS MUST BE DISTINGUISHED FROM  
17 BASELINE LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS RATHER THAN EMBEDDED IN A WAY  
18 THAT CREATES UNNECESSARY REGULATORY BURDEN OR CONFUSION.

19 (2) (a) THE CHILD CARE LICENSURE AND QUALITY TASK FORCE  
20 CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

21 (I) THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE SHALL APPOINT THE FOLLOWING  
22 MEMBERS:

23 (A) A REPRESENTATIVE FROM AN ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CARE  
24 PROVIDERS;

25 (B) A REPRESENTATIVE OF A LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTER; AND

26 (C) A REPRESENTATIVE OF A LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME;

27 (II) THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SHALL



1 APPOINT THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

2 (A) ONE MEMBER FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES;

3 (B) A REPRESENTATIVE OF A COMMUNITY-BASED OR EARLY

4 CHILDHOOD ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION; AND

5 (C) A REPRESENTATIVE OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT;

6 (III) THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE SENATE SHALL APPOINT THE

7 FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

8 (A) ONE MEMBER OF THE SENATE;

9 (B) A REPRESENTATIVE FROM AN ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CARE

10 PROVIDERS; AND

11 (C) A REPRESENTATIVE OF A LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTER;

12 (IV) THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

13 SHALL APPOINT THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

14 (A) A REPRESENTATIVE FROM A RURAL CHILD CARE PROVIDER;

15 (B) AN INDIVIDUAL WITH EXPERTISE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

16 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT; AND

17 (C) THE PARENT OF A CHILD CARED FOR IN A LICENSED CHILD CARE

18 CENTER OR LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME; AND

19 (V) THE GOVERNOR SHALL APPOINT ONE MEMBER WHO IS A

20 REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT.

21 (b) THE APPOINTING AUTHORITIES SHALL MAKE THEIR INITIAL

22 APPOINTMENTS TO THE TASK FORCE NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 2026.

23 (3) EACH MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE WHO IS APPOINTED

24 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION SERVES AT THE PLEASURE

25 OF THE APPOINTING OFFICIAL. THE TERM OF APPOINTMENT FOR TASK

26 FORCE MEMBERS EXPIRES ON JULY 1, 2027.

27 (4) NOTWITHSTANDING SECTION 2-2-326, EACH LEGISLATIVE

1 MEMBER OF THE TASK FORCE SERVES WITHOUT COMPENSATION BUT IS  
2 ENTITLED TO BE REIMBURSED FOR ACTUAL AND NECESSARY EXPENSES  
3 INCURRED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THE MEMBER'S DUTIES ON THE TASK  
4 FORCE TO THE EXTENT THAT THE TASK FORCE RECEIVES GIFTS, GRANTS, OR  
5 DONATIONS TO COVER THE COST OF REIMBURSEMENT. THE  
6 NONLEGISLATIVE MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE SERVE WITHOUT  
7 COMPENSATION AND WITHOUT REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES.

8 (5) (a) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT SHALL  
9 CONVENE THE FIRST MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE NO LATER THAN THREE  
10 WEEKS AFTER THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HAS DETERMINED THAT THE TASK  
11 FORCE HAS RECEIVED AN AMOUNT OF GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS  
12 SUFFICIENT TO BEGIN ITS WORK DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION OR AUGUST  
13 1, 2026, WHICHEVER IS LATER.

14 (b) THE TASK FORCE SHALL ELECT A CHAIR FROM AMONG THE TASK  
15 FORCE'S MEMBERS.

16 (c) THE TASK FORCE SHALL MEET AT LEAST FOUR TIMES IN 2026 TO  
17 COMPLETE THE DUTIES SPECIFIED IN THIS SECTION. THE CHAIR MAY CALL  
18 ADDITIONAL MEETINGS, SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE MONEY, AS NECESSARY  
19 FOR THE TASK FORCE TO COMPLETE ITS DUTIES. THE TASK FORCE SHALL  
20 ESTABLISH PROCEDURES TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE TO  
21 PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETINGS REMOTELY.

22 (6) THE TASK FORCE SHALL STUDY, EVALUATE, AND RECOMMEND  
23 REFORMS TO COLORADO'S CHILD CARE LICENSURE AND QUALITY RATING  
24 AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS WITH THE GOAL OF CREATING A COHERENT,  
25 STREAMLINED FRAMEWORK THAT:

26 (a) FOCUSES PRIMARILY ON CHILD HEALTH, LIFE, AND SAFETY;

27 (b) IS EFFICIENT, CONSISTENT, AND PREDICTABLE FOR PROVIDERS;

- 1 (c) IS EASY FOR FAMILIES TO UNDERSTAND AND NAVIGATE;
- 2 (d) SUPPORTS PROVIDER SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH; AND
- 3 (e) IMPROVES CHILD CARE AVAILABILITY FOR FAMILIES AND
- 4 COMMUNITIES.

5 (7) THE TASK FORCE SHALL CONDUCT AN INTEGRATED STUDY  
6 THAT INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

7 (a) A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE STATE'S CHILD CARE  
8 LICENSING REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESSES FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS AND  
9 FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES THAT:

10 (I) IDENTIFIES REDUNDANT, OUTDATED, OR INEFFICIENT  
11 REQUIREMENTS THAT BURDEN CHILD CARE PROVIDERS UNNECESSARILY;  
12 AND

13 (II) EVALUATES INCONSISTENCIES IN LICENSING INTERPRETATION,  
14 MONITORING, AND ENFORCEMENT;

15 (b) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DESIGNING A STREAMLINED  
16 LICENSURE SYSTEM FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS AND FAMILY CHILD CARE  
17 HOMES THAT:

18 (I) PRIORITIZES CHILD HEALTH, LIFE, AND SAFETY AS THE CORE  
19 REGULATORY FUNCTION;

20 (II) SIMPLIFIES DOCUMENTATION, INSPECTIONS, AND COMPLIANCE  
21 PROCESSES AND THAT SHORTENS ASSOCIATED TIMELINES;

22 (III) IS EASY FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS TO USE, EASY FOR  
23 FAMILIES TO UNDERSTAND, AND CLEARLY COMMUNICATES WHAT  
24 LICENSURE MEANS IN TERMS OF ITS:

25 (A) PROTOCOLS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS; AND

26 (B) HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTECTIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
27 ASSURANCES FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES; AND

1 (IV) IMPROVES THE AVAILABILITY OF HIGH QUALITY CHILD CARE  
2 BY REDUCING THE ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS ASSOCIATED WITH OPENING  
3 NEW FACILITIES WHILE MAINTAINING HIGH STANDARDS FOR QUALITY;

4 (c) AN EVALUATION OF HOW TO DEFINE QUALITY AND DISTINGUISH  
5 IT FROM THE BASELINE REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE FOR CHILD CARE  
6 CENTERS AND FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES. THE QUALITY DEFINITION MUST  
7 TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION INPUT FROM THE DEPARTMENT.

8 (d) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING A SEPARATE QUALITY  
9 ENHANCEMENT MODEL BEYOND THE BASELINE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
10 LICENSURE;

11 (e) AN EVALUATION OF HOW LICENSURE AND QUALITY  
12 ENHANCEMENT SYSTEMS CAN BETTER SERVE FAMILIES BY:

13 (I) IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY AND CLARITY;

14 (II) MAKING IT EASIER TO FIND, COMPARE, AND ACCESS CHILD  
15 CARE OPTIONS; AND

16 (III) SUPPORTING A MIXED-DELIVERY SYSTEM, INCLUDING CHILD  
17 CARE CENTERS; FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES; AND FAMILY, FRIEND, AND  
18 NEIGHBOR PROVIDERS; AND

19 (f) A REVIEW OF CHILD CARE LICENSURE AND QUALITY  
20 ENHANCEMENT SYSTEMS IN OTHER STATES TO IDENTIFY:

21 (I) BEST PRACTICES AND INNOVATIVE MODELS THAT REDUCE  
22 BURDENS FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS WHILE MAINTAINING OR IMPROVING  
23 QUALITY;

24 (II) EXAMPLES OF STREAMLINED SYSTEMS THAT DISTINGUISH  
25 BASELINE LICENSURE FROM OPTIONAL QUALITY ENHANCEMENT; AND

26 (III) EXAMPLES OF STREAMLINED SYSTEMS THAT FAMILIES FIND  
27 TRANSPARENT, ACCESSIBLE, AND EASY TO NAVIGATE.

1           (8) THE TASK FORCE SHALL CONTRACT WITH AN INDEPENDENT  
2     THIRD-PARTY ENTITY TO ASSIST IN THE CONDUCT OF THE STUDY PURSUANT  
3     TO SUBSECTION (7) OF THIS SECTION AND TO PREPARE A FINAL REPORT  
4     SUMMARIZING THE STUDY'S FINDINGS AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
5     THE TASK FORCE ISSUED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (9) OF THIS SECTION.

6           (9) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2027, THE TASK FORCE SHALL  
7     REPORT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF  
8     REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES;  
9     THE GOVERNOR; AND THE DEPARTMENT. THE REPORT MUST INCLUDE THE  
10    FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE, INCLUDING  
11    RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES  
12    REGARDING:

13          (a) THE CREATION OF A NEW, STREAMLINED SYSTEM FOR  
14    LICENSING CHILD CARE CENTERS AND FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES THAT  
15    FOCUSES PRIMARILY ON PROTECTING CHILD HEALTH, LIFE, AND SAFETY;

16          (b) THE CREATION OF A CLEARLY DEFINED, OPTIONAL QUALITY  
17    ENHANCEMENT FRAMEWORK THAT PROVIDES QUALITY ENDORSEMENTS OR  
18    RECOGNITIONS BEYOND BASELINE LICENSURE; AND

19          (c) CHANGES NECESSARY TO REDUCE THE BURDENS ON COLORADO  
20    CHILD CARE PROVIDERS AND IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY AND CLARITY FOR  
21    COLORADO FAMILIES THAT ARE INFORMED BY WHAT HAS WORKED  
22    EFFECTIVELY IN OTHER STATES.

23          (10) (a) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE  
24    IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION BE FUNDED ENTIRELY BY GIFTS,  
25    GRANTS, AND DONATIONS, AND THAT GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS  
26    WILL BE RECEIVED THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF THE STUDY. THE  
27    GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL NOT APPROPRIATE MONEY FROM THE GENERAL

1 FUND FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION, AND THE DEPARTMENT  
2 AND APPOINTING AUTHORITIES SHALL CARRY OUT THEIR DUTIES SET FORTH  
3 IN THIS SECTION WITHIN EXISTING APPROPRIATIONS.

4 (b) THE DEPARTMENT MAY SEEK, ACCEPT, AND EXPEND GIFTS,  
5 GRANTS, OR DONATIONS FROM PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCES TO  
6 IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION. THE TASK FORCE SHALL NOT IMPLEMENT THIS  
7 SECTION UNLESS THE TASK FORCE RECEIVES AN AMOUNT OF GIFTS,  
8 GRANTS, AND DONATIONS THAT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DEEMS  
9 NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.

10 (c) THE STUDY DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (7) OF THIS SECTION  
11 AND FINAL REPORT DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (9) OF THIS SECTION ARE  
12 CONTINGENT ON MONEY BEING AVAILABLE TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY AND  
13 FINAL REPORT. IF MONEY IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR THE TASK FORCE OR ANY  
14 OTHER ENTITY TO CARRY OUT ITS DUTIES REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THIS  
15 SECTION, THE TASK FORCE OR THE ENTITY IS NOT REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT  
16 THE DUTIES. A CONTRACT WITH A THIRD-PARTY ENTITY THAT WILL  
17 PROVIDE SERVICES RELATED TO THE STUDY AND FINAL REPORT MUST BE  
18 CONTINGENT ON GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS BEING AVAILABLE FOR  
19 THAT PURPOSE.

20 (11) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2028.

21 **SECTION 5. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,  
22 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
23 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for  
24 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state  
25 institutions.