



ASSEMBLY MEMBER

**Kevin Mullin**

DISTRICT 22

## AB 2626: The Statewide Equity Bill



### **PURPOSE**

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AB 2626, The Statewide Equity Bill, will apply current early learning and child care subsidized program exceptions, afforded in thirteen counties, to families and providers throughout the state.

### **PROBLEM & BACKGROUND**

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Existing law does not reflect the fiscal reality of California's diverse socio-economic landscape. Families living in rural California often face poverty and lack of access to services while those living in metropolitan areas struggle with high costs of living and housing shortages. These issues pose challenges to meeting the early care and education needs of working families.

Recent legislation has allowed 13 pilot counties to set exceptions to statewide requirements and flexibility for families living and receiving services in those counties. The unintended consequence of these proposals is inequity in services across the state. Families in neighboring counties have different or enhanced benefits for services, depending on which county they reside in or receive services from.

As a result, these policies are causing inequities for providers child care and early learning services, as reimbursement rates may differ from county to county. Additionally, providers serving in multiple counties may be receiving different reimbursements depending on the location of the facility.

Providers of services are finding it increasingly difficult to earn the contract funds due to: low eligibility thresholds, age restrictions of children they can enroll, program quality requirements and low reimbursement rates.

### **SOLUTION**

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- Expand age eligibility and remove restrictions for children than can be served in a California State Preschool Program (CSPP).
- Increase the State Median Income (SMI) eligibility threshold in order to expand the number of working families that are eligible for services.
- Increase the eligibility timeframe in order to allow stability and continuity of services for children and families, resulting in better outcomes for children while closing the kindergarten readiness gap.
- Increase the utilization of available funding by allowing providers stability and continuity of services of enrollment of children and families.
- Provide better workforce stability by providing staff development opportunities.
- Flexibility in funding adjustments - allowing contractors to better utilize available funding.

### **SUPPORT**

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson (Sponsor)

### **STAFF CONTACT**

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