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ELOISE GÓMEZ REYES
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AB 92: Child Care Family Fees

SUMMARY

This bill alleviates the burdens that families face in paying for child care by creating an equitable sliding scale for family fees.

EXISTING LAW/BACKGROUND

California is one of the most expensive states for parents who need child care services. In Los Angeles County and statewide, the average two-parent working family spends around 20% of their annual income on child care. There is broad consensus among child care experts and economists that spending more than 7% of annual income on child care places economic stress on working families.

While there are a number of State and Federally funded programs that help families pay for child care, families who need care must still pay family fees which can make subsidized care unaffordable. With limited disposable income, working families struggle to pay high fees and are forced to make difficult decisions about basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and keeping up with fee payments. A recent study found that, in Sacramento County, at least 10% of families paying fees are on payment plans for back fees they have been unable to afford.

These families are at significant risk of losing their subsidized child care which can, in turn, jeopardize their employment or education. This places them at greater risk of reliance on the state's other welfare programs and prevents families from rising out of poverty. As families earn raises and their income rises, so do their family fees, which then erases any economic gains they have made. The current fee structure penalizes families for their hard work.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only heightened the need for affordable child care for families and communities of color, who are a significant part of California's essential workforce. In light of the public health crisis and economic recession, parents need affordable child care now more than ever in order to continue providing for their families.

THIS BILL

This bill will create an equitable sliding scale for family fees that will alleviate the burden on working families struggling to pay for child care and early childhood education services. By increasing the affordability of child care to working families, this bill will benefit the economic recovery of the state by helping parents remain in the workforce and achieve economic stability.

SUPPORT

Parent Voices (Co-Sponsors)
Child Care Resource Center (Co-Sponsors)
Child Care Law Center (Co-Sponsors)
California Resource and Referral Network (Co-sponsors)

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