

HB 1524 -- Child Care Facility Rating System

Sponsor: Franz

This bill 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, 2008, a quality rating system for early childhood and before- and after-school programs that are licensed by the Department of Social Services. Licensing will be the baseline rating, with the highest rating being accreditation. The Department of Social Services must use the model developed by the University of Missouri Center for Family Policy and Research to establish the quality rating system. The rating system will allow an individual to evaluate and select the best early childhood program, provide accountability information to policymakers and funders, and guide providers in achieving quality outcomes for child care. The rating system must be fully implemented by July 1, 2011.

By July 1, 2010, 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.

The bill creates the Quality Rating System Program Improvement Grant Fund to be administered by the Department of Social Services to provide grants directly to licensed providers to make quality improvements to comply with the rating system. Moneys in the fund will consist of donations, gifts, transfers, and appropriations from the General Assembly.

The Department of Social Services in collaboration with the departments of Health and Senior Services and Elementary and Secondary Education will be responsible for:

- (1) Collecting, developing, and distributing resource materials to educate the public and child care programs about the rating system; and
- (2) Posting the ratings on the Internet by January 1, 2010.

The provisions of the bill will expire six years from the effective date.