A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING A STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS INFANT AND FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME SHORTAGES IN COLORADO.

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 http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill requires the department of human services (department), in consultation with the early childhood leadership commission (commission) and various stakeholders, to draft a strategic action plan addressing the declining availability of family child care homes and infant child care.

The bill requires the department to submit the completed strategic
action plan to the commission, the state board of human services, the joint
budget committee, the health and human services and education
committees of the senate or any successor committees, and the public
health care and human services and education committees of the house of
representatives or any successor committees no later than December 1,
2019.

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

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly
finds that:

(a) Family child care homes provide an essential element of the
child care network in both urban and rural areas of the state;

(b) In certain counties, there are no child care centers, making
family child care homes the only option working families have for
licensed child care;

(c) Eighty-nine percent of child care businesses in the nation are
owned by women, making the viability of child care businesses an
important component of the state's economic success;

(d) Many parents prefer family child care homes, where children
experience a home-like environment conducive to healthy and safe
development;

(e) The state has a shortage of licensed, safe, and affordable child
care options, and there is a growing need for child care facilities due to
the increase in working parents;

(f) Since 2010, the state has experienced a decline of one thousand
five hundred eighty-two family child care homes, at an average of
approximately two hundred family child care homes closing each year;

and

(g) Because infant child care is more often provided in family
child care homes than in child care centers, the decline of family child care homes has resulted in over seven thousand three hundred fewer infant slots in the state in 2018 than in 2010.

(2) The general assembly declares, therefore, that it is necessary that the state department, in consultation with the early childhood leadership commission, study the decline of family child care homes and available infant child care in the state to identify the reasons for these shortages and to recommend strategies for improving the recruitment and retention of family child care homes and available infant child care throughout the state.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, add part 2 to article 6.2 of title 26 as follows:

PART 2
INFANT AND FAMILY CHILD CARE
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

26-6.2-201. Family child care homes strategic action plan - creation - definitions. (1) The state department and the commission shall create a strategic action plan to address the decline of family child care homes and available infant child care throughout the state.

(2) As used in this part 2, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) "Child care center" has the same meaning as set forth in section 26-6-102 (5).

(b) "Family child care home" has the same meaning as set forth in section 26-6-102 (13).

26-6.2-202. Strategic action plan - requirements. (1) The
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN CREATED IN SECTION 26-6.2-201 MUST INCLUDE,
AT A MINIMUM:

(a) STATE-SPECIFIC RESEARCH CONCERNING THE LACK OF
LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES AND AVAILABLE LICENSED INFANT
CHILD CARE AND THE EFFECT IT HAS ON FAMILIES AND INFANTS;

(b) OBSTACLES TO OBTAINING AND RETAINING A FAMILY CHILD
CARE HOME LICENSE AND RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES TO REDUCE THESE
OBSTACLES;

(c) RESEARCH REGARDING THE REASONS WHY PROVIDERS STOP
OPERATING LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES AND RECOMMENDED
STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THESE REASONS;

(d) RESEARCH REGARDING THE REASONS WHY LICENSED FAMILY
CHILD CARE HOMES AND LICENSED CHILD CARE CENTERS DO NOT PROVIDE
INFANT CHILD CARE AND RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THESE
REASONS;

(e) INFORMATION CONCERNING STATE AND LOCAL BUILDING,
ZONING, LAND USE, BUSINESS LICENSING, AND PROPERTY TAX LAWS OR
POLICIES THAT CREATE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE CONDITIONS FOR
OPERATING LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES OR PROVIDING INFANT
CHILD CARE, AND RECOMMENDED LAWS OR POLICIES FOR STATE AND
LOCAL JURISDICTIONS THAT WOULD IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR OPERATING
LICENSED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES OR PROVIDING INFANT CHILD CARE;

(f) THE EXTENT TO WHICH STATE CHILD CARE LICENSING
REQUIREMENTS, QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES, AND THE COLORADO
CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PROVIDE HEALTHY, SAFE, AND
HIGH-QUALITY LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES WHILE ALSO PROMOTING
AVAILABLE AND AFFORDABLE FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES AND INFANT
CHILD CARE;

(g) The extent to which public investments in child care create adequate incentives for operating licensed family child care homes or providing infant child care;

(h) A list of available financial resources and gaps in available resources, training, and technical assistance that would assist potential family child care home providers in becoming licensed and staying in business;

(i) An examination of available financial resources, training, and technical assistance that may be available to assist potential family child care home providers in becoming licensed and staying in business;

(j) The anticipated costs associated with implementing the recommendations in the strategic action plan; and

(k) Recommendations that do not require additional resources.

(2) The state department, in preparing the strategic action plan, must consult with, to the extent practicable:

(a) Family child care home providers and organizations representing them;

(b) Child care centers and organizations representing them;

(c) Early childhood educators and organizations representing them;

(d) County departments of human or social services;

(e) Counties and municipalities;

(f) Building, planning, and zoning professionals and
(g) Early childhood councils and organizations representing them;
(h) Business and economic development organizations;
(i) Early childhood advocacy and policy organizations at the state or national level with expertise on strategies to increase available and affordable family child care homes and infant child care;
(j) Parents of infants and organizations that represent them; and
(k) Any other interested persons or organizations.

(3) To the extent practicable, the state department must identify recommendations that have support among the parties listed in subsection (2) of this section. The state department must indicate the extent of support for recommendations among the parties listed in subsection (2) of this section within the strategic action plan.

26-6.2-203. Report. On or before December 1, 2019, the state department shall submit the strategic action plan to the commission, the state board of human services, the joint budget committee, the health and human services and education committees of the senate or any successor committees, and the public health care and human services and education committees of the house of representatives or any successor committees. The state department shall post the completed strategic action plan on the state department’s website.

26-6.2-204. Repeal of part. This part 2 is repealed, effective
JULY 1, 2020.

SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 2, 2019, if adjournment sine die is on May 3, 2019); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2020 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.