

ASSEMBLY, No. 4733

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman GABRIELA M. MOSQUERA

District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

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District 37 (Bergen)

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Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Dunn

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Task Force on Child Care Deserts in New Jersey.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/26/2020)

1 **AN ACT** establishing the Task Force on Child Care Deserts in New
2 Jersey.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. a. There is established in the Department of Children and
8 Families the Task Force on Child Care Deserts in New Jersey. The
9 purpose of the task force shall be to identify and study
10 child care deserts and to evaluate why these child care deserts exist
11 in New Jersey.

12 b. The task force shall consist of 15 members as follows:

13 (1) the Commissioner of Human Service, the Director of the
14 Division of Family Development in the Department of Human
15 Services, the Commissioner of Children and Families, and the
16 Director of the Division on Women in the Department of Children
17 and Families, or their designees, who shall serve ex-officio;

18 (2) one member of the Advisory Council on Child Care;

19 (3) one member of a family day care sponsoring organization;

20 (4) one member of a child care resource and referral agency

21 (5) four members appointed by the Governor who have
22 experience, training, and interests in child care issues;

23 (6) one member appointed by the Governor upon the
24 recommendation of the President of the Senate and one member
25 appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of the
26 Minority Leader of the Senate, both of whom shall be members of
27 the public who reside in a child care desert located in an urban area
28 of the State; and

29 (7) one member appointed by the Governor upon the
30 recommendation of the Speaker of the General Assembly and one
31 member appointed by the Governor upon the recommendation of
32 the Minority Leader of the General Assembly, both of whom shall
33 be members of the public who reside in a child care desert located
34 in a rural area of the State.

35 c. Appointments to the task force shall be made within 30 days
36 after the effective date of this act. Vacancies in the membership of
37 the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original
38 appointments were made. Members of the task force shall serve
39 without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary
40 expenditures incurred in the performance of their duties as members
41 of the task force within the limits of funds appropriated or
42 otherwise made available to the task force for its purposes.

43 d. The task force shall organize as soon as practicable, but no
44 later than 30 days following the appointment of its members. The
45 task force shall choose a chairperson from among its members and
46 shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the task
47 force. The presence of eight members of the task force shall
48 constitute a quorum. The task force may conduct business without

1 a quorum, but may only vote on recommendations when a quorum
2 is present.

3
4 e. The Department of Children and Families shall provide
5 stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistants and
6 professional staff as the task force requires for its purposes. The
7 task force shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of
8 the services of the employees of any State, county, or municipal
9 department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may require
10 and as may be available for its purposes.

11 f. As used in this act, “child care desert” means a geographic
12 location that lacks any child care options or a geographic location
13 where there is an insufficient number of licensed child providers
14 resulting in more than two-thirds of the children, who live within
15 that location, unable to receive child care.

16
17 2. The task shall study and evaluate aspects of the provision of
18 child care that may contribute to the existence of child care deserts
19 in New Jersey. The task force shall:

20 a. review existing research, studies, and data concerning child
21 care deserts; and

22 b. identify specific policies for eliminating child care deserts
23 throughout the State including, but not limited to, analyzing the
24 relationship between the existence of child care deserts and:

25 (1) the geographic proximity of licensed child care centers and
26 family day care homes to families accessing child care services;

27 (2) parental labor force participation;

28 (3) the demographic characteristics of families accessing child
29 care services such as race, ethnicity, and employment status;

30 (4) public investments in child care and early education;

31 (5) child care tuition rates and child care subsidy reimbursement
32 rates; and

33 (6) the lack of investment in child care infrastructure including,
34 but not limited to, facility upgrades which address the health,
35 safety, and educational development of children enrolled in child
36 care centers.

37
38 3. a. The task force shall issue a report to the Governor, and to
39 the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-
40 19.1), no later than six months after the task force organizes. The
41 report shall contain the task force’s findings and recommendations.

42 b. The task force shall expire 30 days after the issuance of its
43 report.

44

45 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

The bill establishes the Task Force on Child Care Deserts in New Jersey. The purpose of the task force is to identify, and study child care deserts and evaluate why child care deserts exist in the State. The task force will consist of 15 members as follows: the Commissioner of Human Service, the Director of the Division of Family Development in the Department of Human Services, the Commissioner of Children and Families, and the Director of the Division on Women in the Department of Children and Families, or their designees, who will serve ex-officio; one member of the Advisory Council on Child Care; one member of a family day care sponsoring organization; one member of a child care resource and referral agency; four members appointed by the Governor with experience, training, and interests in child care issues; two members appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the President of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the Senate, respectively, both residing in a child care desert located in an urban area of the State; and two members appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the Speaker of the General Assembly and the Minority Leader of the General Assembly, respectively, both of residing in a child care desert located in a rural area of the State.

Under the bill, the task force is to study and evaluate aspects of the provision of child care that may contribute to the existence of child care deserts in New Jersey. The task is to: review existing research, studies, and data concerning child care deserts; and identify specific policies for eliminating child care deserts throughout the State including, but not limited to, analyzing the relationship between the existence of child care deserts and: the geographic proximity of licensed child care centers and family day care homes to families accessing child care services; parental labor force participation; the demographic characteristics of families accessing child care services such as race, ethnicity, and employment status; public investments in child care and early education; child care tuition rates and child care subsidy reimbursement rates; and the lack of investment in child care infrastructure including, but not limited to, facility upgrades which address the health, safety, and educational development of children enrolled in child care centers.

The bill defines “child care desert” as a geographic location that lacks any child care options or a geographic location where there is an insufficient number of licensed child providers resulting in more than two-thirds of the children, who live within that location, unable to receive child care.

The task force is to issue a report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than six months after the task force organizes, containing the task force’s findings and recommendations, and expire 30 days after the report’s issuance.