

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

State of Oklahoma

SPEAKER:

CHAIR:

I move to amend HB3531 \_\_\_\_\_  
Of the printed Bill  
Page \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Lines \_\_\_\_\_  
Of the Engrossed Bill

By striking the Title, the Enacting Clause, the entire bill, and by  
inserting in lieu thereof the following language:

**AMEND TITLE TO CONFORM TO AMENDMENTS**

Amendment submitted by: Trish Ranson

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reading Clerk

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 59th Legislature (2024)

PROPOSED SUBCOMMITTEE  
SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
HOUSE BILL NO. 3531

By: Ranson

PROPOSED SUBCOMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

An Act relating to children; creating the Early Childhood Task Force; providing for task force membership; providing for election of chair and vice-chair; permitting the selection of honorary chair; directing task force to provide reports; disallowing certain members from receiving compensation or reimbursement; permitting certain members to claim certain expenses; requiring task force to be subject to the Oklahoma Open Records Act and Oklahoma Open Meeting Act; providing that task force documents and recommendations shall only be considered advice; providing a vision statement; providing a mission; providing principles the task force is to be guided by; providing tasks for the task force; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 390 of Title 10, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

1       A. There is hereby created the Early Childhood Task Force to  
2 study and make recommendations to improve access to and increase the  
3 quantity of high-quality early childhood services.

4       B. The task force shall be comprised of twenty (20) members to  
5 be appointed as follows:

6       1. The Secretary of Human Services, or a designee;

7       2. The State Commissioner of Health, or a designee;

8       3. The Secretary of Commerce, or a designee;

9       4. The Secretary of Education, or a designee;

10      5. A representative of business selected by the State Chamber  
11 of Oklahoma;

12      6. A representative of a philanthropic organization dedicated  
13 to early childhood;

14      7. A representative selected by the Director of Oklahoma Head  
15 Start;

16      8. A representative selected by the Licensed Child Care  
17 Association of Oklahoma;

18      9. A representative selected by the Oklahoma Child Care  
19 Association;

20      10. The Executive Director of Oklahoma Partnership for School  
21 Readiness;

22      11. A representative of the Children's Advocacy Centers of  
23 Oklahoma;

1        12. A representative of the Oklahoma Institute for Child  
2 Advocacy;

3        13. An Oklahoma State Senator selected by the Pro Tempore of  
4 the Senate;

5        14. An Oklahoma State Representative selected by the Speaker of  
6 the House of Representatives;

7        15. A representative of the Oklahoma Parent Teacher  
8 Association;

9        16. A representative of parents with young children selected by  
10 the Oklahoma Early Childhood Program (OECF);

11       17. A representative responsible for programs under Part C of  
12 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) selected by  
13 the State Commissioner of Health;

14       18. A representative from Oklahoma State University's  
15 Department of Human Development and Family Science selected by the  
16 Director of the Department of Human Development and Family Science;

17       19. A pediatric specialist selected by the Oklahoma Chapter of  
18 the American Academy of Pediatrics (OKAAP); and

19       20. A child development specialist selected by the Early  
20 Childhood Education Institute.

21       C. The Early Childhood Task Force shall elect a chair and vice-  
22 chair, or co-chairs, from the Task Force's membership, and the chair  
23 or co-chairs shall establish rules for the Task Force's meetings and  
24

1 the conducting of business. Upon the absence or vacancy of the  
2 chair, the vice-chair shall serve as chair in an acting capacity.

3 D. An honorary chair may be selected to serve in a ceremonial  
4 capacity. The honorary chair shall not serve as a voting member of  
5 the Task Force but may engage with the work of the Task Force in an  
6 advisory role or in a manner deemed appropriate by the chair or co-  
7 chairs.

8 E. The Task Force shall develop and submit an initial report to  
9 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House  
10 of Representatives by November 2024 and a final report by November  
11 2025.

12 F. Members shall receive no compensation or reimbursement for  
13 expenses and shall serve voluntarily. Officers or employees of  
14 state agencies who are appointed to the Task Force as part of their  
15 duties shall be authorized to participate on the Task Force and may  
16 claim subsistence, allowance, mileage, or associated expenses from  
17 their respective agency budgets as permitted by law.

18 G. The Task Force shall be subject to the Oklahoma Open Records  
19 Act and the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act.

20 H. Plans, reports, or recommendations of any nature adopted by  
21 the Task Force shall be considered advice to the Legislature and  
22 shall not be construed as official policies, positions, or  
23 interpretations of laws, rules, or regulations by any department or  
24 agency of state government, nor shall any such department or agency

1 be bound in any manner to consider such advice when conducting their  
2 advisory and regulatory affairs.

3 I. The Task Force shall be guided by the following vision  
4 statement: Oklahoma children, especially those between zero (0) and  
5 five (5) years of age deserve healthy childhoods that are supported  
6 by a robust early childhood system which improves outcomes and  
7 effectively provides high-quality early care and education, adapts  
8 to the needs of families and communities, and is equitably  
9 accessible to all communities across the state.

10 J. The Task Force shall work towards the mission of creating a  
11 framework for a single agency governance structure for early  
12 childhood programming that consolidates initiatives and funding  
13 under the leadership of a new cabinet- or department-level position.

14 K. The Task Force's work shall be guided by a commitment to the  
15 following principles:

16 1. Children, family, and community well-being shall be centered  
17 throughout the Early Childhood Task Force's work;

18 2. Efforts shall be focused on maximizing efficiencies to  
19 reduce the administrative burdens on families and improve access to  
20 early childhood services through the creation of a new executive  
21 agency or department;

22 3. The consolidation of early childhood services shall be  
23 informed by what families and communities say they want and need;  
24

1        4. Access to programs and services shall be equitable and  
2 available to all children and families regardless of socioeconomic  
3 status or geographic location;

4        5. Intentional focus shall be placed on developing strategies  
5 to reach families and young children in care deserts or furthest  
6 from opportunity and existing resources;

7        6. Access to affordable and quality healthcare, nutrition,  
8 childcare, mental health, home visiting, early intervention, support  
9 for families, early learning, and other services in the critical  
10 prenatal to five (5) age period will decisively impact academic  
11 success, economic opportunities, and the prosperity of Oklahoma;

12       7. Efforts shall be made to use data-informed approaches and  
13 explore better ways to develop shared data systems;

14       8. Work shall focus on strengthening and expanding the  
15 childcare delivery system already in use in Oklahoma;

16       9. Alignment across sectors and state agencies will increase  
17 capacity, maximize funding, and create a more streamlined delivery  
18 of services;

19       10. The importance of growing a diverse and well-supported  
20 early childhood workforce shall remain at the forefront and be  
21 informed by the Task Force's work;

22       11. While focusing on advancing the delivery system, work shall  
23 highlight the importance of defining quality care and expanding  
24

1 capacity and access to create a greater quantity of quality  
2 services;

3 12. To incentivize innovation and respond to family needs,  
4 communities must be empowered to develop local, community-based  
5 solutions that take a whole-child and whole-family approach in  
6 responding to needs;

7 13. To ensure holistic childhood well-being and improve health  
8 outcomes, there must be alignment between state efforts to improve  
9 early learning and care and existing prenatal and maternal health  
10 initiatives; and

11 14. Strengthening early childhood developmental health is vital  
12 to ensuring that children are prepared to achieve academic success  
13 and are setup for lifelong learning.

14 L. The Task Force's duties shall include:

15 1. Conducting an analysis of the current early childhood  
16 delivery system in Oklahoma and how it is financed with specific  
17 focus on gaps, inefficiencies, and redundancies. This work should  
18 focus on how creating a single-agency governance structure for early  
19 childhood services could overcome these challenges and improve how  
20 care is delivered, accessed, and funded. This analysis must  
21 specifically include:

22 a. a review of current early childhood programs and  
23 policies dispersed between the Department of Human  
24 Services, State Department of Health, Oklahoma



1 Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse  
2 Services, and the State Department of Education. The  
3 review should pay special attention to where current  
4 statutory authority over certain operations exists and  
5 where possible areas of redundancy occur,

6 b. a review of how current funding systems blend and  
7 various funding opportunities, with special attention  
8 as to how funding streams are currently utilized for  
9 early childhood programs that are housed across  
10 departments. This fiscal review should map the routes  
11 all private, public, federal, and state funding  
12 streams take from funding authority to program  
13 application,

14 c. a review of how Oklahoma might integrate existing  
15 programming into a consolidated delivery system and  
16 what needs might exist for new programming that the  
17 state currently lacks,

18 d. recommendations on how cross-agency collaboration and  
19 partnerships can be fostered to develop a whole-of-  
20 government approach to strengthening the delivery of  
21 early childhood services in a single-agency model,  
22 (1) specifically ensuring that data infrastructure is  
23 integrated across agencies, account for both  
24

- 1                    qualitative and quantitative methods, and can be  
2                    widely utilized by multiple state agencies,
- 3       e.       recommendations on how a single executive agency or  
4               department might maximize efficiencies for early  
5               childhood providers and their workforce. This work  
6               should determine how licensing, workforce development  
7               and support, and facility review can be improved to  
8               eliminate barriers to entry for providers and  
9               professionals. This should also include a review of  
10              current regulatory structures that complicate the  
11              process of entering the early childhood sector,
- 12       f.       recommendations on how a single executive agency or  
13               department can strengthen the existing health care  
14               workforce to better support the development of young  
15               children and well-being of mothers through improved  
16               access to comprehensive and preventive care. This  
17               should also include a review of how to secure improved  
18               health outcomes for children, financial sustainability  
19               of delivery models, and cultivating workforce  
20               pipelines,
- 21       g.       an analysis of key lessons learned from states already  
22               advancing consolidated systems of early childhood  
23               governance to inform Oklahoma's own process;
- 24

1        2. Conducting a series of stakeholder engagement opportunities  
2 to elicit feedback on the current early childhood governance  
3 structure and better understand the needs of parents, families,  
4 providers, and businesses;

5            a. Following the engagement of stakeholders, the Task  
6 Force shall conduct a review that synthesizes feedback  
7 received from families, providers, community leaders,  
8 and the business sector. This review shall include  
9 recommendations on how the state delivery system and  
10 governance model can be improved to respond to family  
11 and community needs. It shall also include  
12 recommendations for how the state can better engage  
13 with parents, families, and communities on a regular  
14 basis to ensure family-voice is centered in the work  
15 of state agencies;

16        3. Drafting a transition plan to ensure the continuous  
17 operation of state services upon the creation of a new state agency  
18 for early childhood. This plan shall:

19            a. include detailed recommendations for what programs and  
20 services should remain in their current place or  
21 transition into a new agency. Each recommendation  
22 shall consider the challenges and benefits of moving  
23 programs from one agency to another,  
24

- 1           b.    focus on movement between agencies and how  
2                collaboration can be strengthened with nonexecutive  
3                agencies. It shall also include recommendations for  
4                any necessary interagency agreements,  
5           c.    include a review of what additional funding and  
6                resources might be needed to transition to a single-  
7                agency governance model effectively and efficiently,  
8           d.    Provide recommended goals and metrics for the agency  
9                to strive towards once operational, and

10       4.   Drafting proposed legislation that creates a new cabinet-  
11 level, single state agency that oversees Oklahoma's early childhood  
12 education and care programs.

13       SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2024.

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15       59-2-10386       CMA       02/22/24  
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