

CHILD CARE COMMISSION RESOLUTION

1999 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Sponsor: Leonard M. Blackham

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE LEGISLATURE URGING THE GOVERNOR TO ESTABLISH A BUSINESS COMMISSION ON CHILD CARE TO IDENTIFY AND ASSESS CHILD CARE NEEDS WITHIN THE STATE AND DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO MEET THOSE NEEDS, INCLUDING APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL STRATEGIES.

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

WHEREAS, a child's parents are the child's primary caregiver and promote responsible parenthood and parental choice within the family structure;

WHEREAS, approximately 25% of Utah's children are living with a single parent;

WHEREAS, the median income of families that have children in Utah is \$33,900;

WHEREAS, many families pay anywhere from 6% to 26% of their incomes for early care and education for their children;

WHEREAS, quality early child care and education is strongly linked to a productive economy and is a vital piece of a community infrastructure;

WHEREAS, recent studies have determined that quality early care and education services have a dramatic long-term impact on a child's ability to succeed in school, achieve economically, and avoid the criminal justice system;

WHEREAS, outcomes for children and their families in the state can be improved through formal collaboration between private enterprise and public entities;

WHEREAS, continued population growth within the state requires careful planning by both the private and public sector and a willingness on both their parts to invest in the child care infrastructure in order to maintain the quality of life and economic vitality Utahans have come to expect;

WHEREAS, the demand for early child care and education programs continues to increase in proportion to the dramatic influx of single and dual-earner families into the Utah workforce;

WHEREAS, child care is a business and workforce issue that affects productivity, recruitment, retention, absenteeism, and stress of employees;

WHEREAS, business recognizes that quality out of school time programs prevent youth from unsavory experiences and prepare them to take their rightful place as productive employees and citizens;

WHEREAS, child care is costly to provide, with donations and foregone wages for staff accounting for more than one-quarter of the full cost of care; and

WHEREAS, addressing the issue of quality child care should be a high priority of employers in the business community since employers benefit greatly when their employees' children are in stable, reliable care:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah urge the Governor to establish a Business Commission on Child Care to identify and assess child care needs within the state and develop recommendations to meet those needs, including appropriate financial strategies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourage the Governor to appoint business leaders to the Commission that represent a wide range of private enterprise interests within the state and recognize the impact the total business community could have on child care in Utah.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature urge the Governor to charge the Commission with accepting responsibility to help lead a concerted effort to establish child care policies and programs through which children within the state can have rewarding and successful lives.