Legislation Details (With Text)

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Effective date:	9/28/2021		
Title:	WHEREAS, many child care programs have operated their business with razor-thin margins, which are now significant losses due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; and,		
Sponsors:	Deborah L. Gross, Erika Strassburger, All Members		
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Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
9/28/2021	1	City Council	Adopted	Pass

WHEREAS, many child care programs have operated their business with razor-thin margins, which are now significant losses due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, teachers and staff at child care programs make an average of less than $11.00 per hour, wages that are not commensurate to the value of the services they provide; and,

WHEREAS, roughly 50% of early child care workers are eligible for government assistance programs to afford the growing costs of daily living which means that a large number of child care workers leave their jobs in search of higher paying jobs; and,

WHEREAS, the struggle to recruit and retain a qualified workforce is the number one challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 92% of child care programs statewide reporting staffing shortages which affects more than 34,000 children that could be served in their programs; and,

WHEREAS, the retention of quality early child care workers impacts availability of high-quality care and education for children and families across the Commonwealth; and,

WHEREAS, the publicly funded child care system and private pay model does not provide financial stability for child care providers; and,

WHEREAS, child care providers have lost revenue due to under-enrollment; and,

WHEREAS, only 15% of subsidy-eligible infants and toddlers are served in Pennsylvania through the Child Care Works (CCW) subsidy program; and,

WHEREAS, child care is essential for working families and subsidy copayments are often a burden on low-income families; and,

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WHEREAS, in Pennsylvania 70% of children under the age of five had all adults in their household in the labor force prior to the pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, over 850 child care programs are now permanently closed and over 350 temporarily closed across the state; and,

WHEREAS, child care is vital for local economic recovery and stability; and,

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania received $1.2B to provide critical relief to the child care industry and to families who rely on child care; and,

WHEREAS, The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) has made American Rescue Plan Act Stabilization Grant Applications available to eligible child care providers in September 2021; and,

WHEREAS, the Keystone STARS Education and Retention Award rewarded employees who furthered their education and which helped offset staffing expenses needed to operate child care centers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Council of the City of Pittsburgh calls on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the administration of Governor Tom Wolf to reinstate the Education and Retention Award with improvements to support equity; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Council of the City of Pittsburgh calls on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the administration of Governor Tom Wolf to release details about the disbursement of the remaining $400+ Million American Rescue Plan discretionary child care funding and quickly release these funds to support child care providers and families who have been adversely affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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