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Date: (Filing No. S-)

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Reproduced and distributed under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate.

STATE OF MAINE

SENATE

132ND LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to S.P. 554, L.D. 1414, “An Act to Support and Sustain Maine’s Child Care Workforce”

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'Resolve, to Improve the Availability of Child Care by Increasing Certain Reimbursements Under the Maine Child Care Affordability Program and Establishing a Grant Program to Facilitate Off-hours Care'

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and inserting the following:

'Sec. 1. Reimbursement for child care of infants and toddlers under Maine Child Care Affordability Program. Resolved: That, no later than January 1, 2027, the Department of Health and Human Services shall increase the rates of reimbursement for the care of infants and toddlers paid to providers under the Maine Child Care Affordability Program established under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 22, section 3731-A. The resulting reimbursement rates for care of infants and toddlers must be 20% higher than the reimbursement rates paid to child care centers and family child care providers for the care of children 36 months of age or older.

Sec. 2. Grant program for child care providers providing off-hours care. Resolved: That the Department of Health and Human Services shall develop a grant program, including the criteria and process for applications, awards and oversight and any other relevant requirements, to facilitate the availability of child care from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. The grant program must be available no later than January 1, 2027 to accept applications from directors or owners of child care centers or family child care providers for funding awards for use in fiscal year 2027-28. The grants must be used by child care providers to hire experts or consultants or dedicated staff to develop a plan for how a provider would provide child care services for any portion of time from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. A grant awarded pursuant to the grant program may not exceed \$10,000 and is available to an applicant on a one-time basis. As long as sufficient funding has been appropriated for the purpose, the total amount for grants awarded in fiscal year 2027-28 is

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

up to a total of \$500,000. If the funding is expended before June 30, 2028, no more grants may be awarded.

Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations. Resolved: That the following appropriations and allocations are made.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF

Child Care Services 0563

Initiative: Establishes one Social Services Program Specialist II position to oversee the grant program. This initiative also provides funding for the grant up to \$500,000, and for the increased reimbursement rates for the care of infants and toddlers.

GENERAL FUND	2025-26	2026-27
POSITIONS - LEGISLATIVE COUNT	0.000	1.000
Personal Services	\$0	\$118,971
All Other	\$0	\$2,936,834
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$0	\$3,055,805

Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section number to read consecutively.

SUMMARY

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, replaces the bill, which is a concept draft, with a resolve.

The amendment requires the Department of Health and Human Services to increase reimbursement rates under the Maine Child Care Affordability Program no later than January 1, 2027 so that reimbursement rates paid to child care centers and family child care providers for the care of infants and toddlers are 20% higher than reimbursement rates for the care of children 36 months of age or older.

The amendment also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a grant program to facilitate the availability of child care from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. The department must establish the grant program so that directors or owners of child care centers or family child care providers may begin applying no later than January 1, 2027 for funding awards for use in fiscal year 2027-28. The grants must be used by child care providers to hire experts or consultants or dedicated staff to develop a plan for how a provider would provide child care services for any portion of time from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. A grant may not exceed \$10,000 and is available to an applicant on a one-time basis. The department is required to develop the grant program, including the criteria and process for applications, awards and oversight and any other relevant requirements. As long as sufficient funding has been appropriated for the purpose, the total amount for grants awarded in fiscal year 2027-28 is up to a total of \$500,000, but if the funding is expended before June 30, 2028, no more grants may be awarded.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED

(See attached)