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Legislative Document

No. 1581

H.P. 1152

House of Representatives, December 30, 2013

An Act To Increase Access to Quality Child Care

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 203.

Received by the Clerk of the House on December 23, 2013. Referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative BERRY of Bowdoinham.
Cosponsored by Senator CRAVEN of Androscoggin and
Representatives: FARNSWORTH of Portland, GILLWAY of Searsport, POULIOT of
Augusta, SANBORN of Gorham, Senators: COLLINS of York, FLOOD of Kennebec,
MILLETT of Cumberland, SAVIELLO of Franklin.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 22 MRSA §3737, sub-§3**, as amended by PL 2001, c. 394, §1, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **3. Quality differential.** To the extent permitted by federal law, the department shall
5 pay a differential rate for child care services that meet or that make substantial progress
6 toward meeting nationally recognized quality standards, such as those standards required
7 by the Head Start program or required for accreditation by the National Association for
8 the Education of Young Children, and shall do so from the Child Care Development Fund
9 25% Quality Set-aside funds or by other acceptable federal practices. The department
10 shall adopt rules to implement this subsection. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection
11 are routine technical rules as defined by Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter ~~H-A~~ 2-A. ~~The~~
12 ~~rules must limit payment of the differential for substantial progress to a period of one~~
13 ~~year. The rules must provide differential rates for substantial progress and must define~~
14 ~~substantial progress as:~~

15 The rules must establish a 4-step child care quality rating system and must provide the
16 following schedule of payments:

17 ~~A. Having submitted program descriptions and awaiting a scheduled visit from an~~
18 ~~accrediting body approved by the department; or~~

19 ~~B. For family child care, having submitted a portfolio for a child development~~
20 ~~associate and awaiting a scheduled observation.~~

21 C. A 5% quality differential rate for step 2 child care services;

22 D. A 10% quality differential rate for step 3 child care services; and

23 E. A 25% quality differential rate for step 4 child care services.

24 Nothing in this subsection requires the department to pay a quality differential rate for
25 child care services provided through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families block
26 grant.

27 **SUMMARY**

28 This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a 4-step
29 child care quality rating system and provide quality differential payments of 5%, 10% and
30 25% for the 3 highest steps. It removes language relating to requirements in the
31 department rules regarding substantial progress toward meeting quality ratings. It
32 provides that the department is not required to pay a quality differential rate for child care
33 services provided through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families block grant.