

1 AN ACT concerning children.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Smart Start Illinois Act is amended by
5 changing Section 95-10 as follows:

6 (325 ILCS 85/95-10)

7 Sec. 95-10. Smart Start Child Care Workforce Compensation
8 Program.

9 (a) The Department of Human Services shall create and
10 establish the Smart Start Child Care Workforce Compensation
11 Program. The purpose of the Smart Start Child Care Workforce
12 Compensation Program is to invest in early childhood education
13 and care service providers, including, but not limited to,
14 providers participating in the Child Care Assistance Program
15 or in a Head Start or Early Head Start Program; to expand the
16 supply of high-quality early childhood education and care; and
17 to create a strong and stable early childhood education and
18 care system with attractive wages, high-quality services, and
19 affordable costs.

20 (b) The purpose of the Smart Start Child Care Workforce
21 Compensation Program is to stabilize community-based early
22 childhood education and care service providers, raise the
23 wages of early childhood educators, and support quality

1 enhancements that can position service providers to
2 participate in other public funding streams, such as Preschool
3 for All, in order to further enhance and expand quality
4 service delivery.

5 (c) Subject to appropriation, the Department of Human
6 Services shall implement the Smart Start Child Care Workforce
7 Compensation Program for eligible licensed day care centers,
8 licensed day care homes, and licensed group day care homes by
9 October 1, 2024, or as soon as practicable, following
10 completion of a planning and transition year. ~~As By October 1,~~
11 ~~2025, or as~~ soon as practicable, and for each year thereafter,
12 subject to appropriation, the Department of Human Services
13 shall continue to operate the Smart Start Child Care Workforce
14 Compensation Program annually with all licensed day care
15 centers, licensed day care homes, and licensed group day care
16 homes that meet eligibility requirements. Head Start programs
17 and Early Head Start programs may be deemed eligible to
18 participate in the Smart Start Child Care Workforce
19 Compensation Program to the extent that appropriations are
20 made available for new program entrants and shall not result
21 in the reduction, reallocation, or displacement of funding for
22 existing recipients. The Smart Start Child Care Workforce
23 Compensation Program shall operate separately from and shall
24 not supplant the Child Care Assistance Program as provided for
25 in Section 9A-11 of the Illinois Public Aid Code.

26 (d) The Department of Human Services shall adopt

1 administrative rules ~~by October 1, 2024~~ to facilitate
2 administration of the Smart Start Child Care Workforce
3 Compensation Program, including, but not limited to,
4 provisions for program eligibility, the application and
5 funding calculation process, eligible expenses, required wage
6 floors, and requirements for financial and personnel reporting
7 and monitoring requirements. Eligibility and funding
8 provisions shall be based on appropriation and a current model
9 of the cost to provide child care services by a licensed child
10 care center or licensed family child care home.

11 (e) Participation in multiple funding streams. A provider
12 participating in the Smart Start Child Care Workforce
13 Compensation Program may simultaneously receive funding
14 through Head Start or Early Head Start programs. Receipt of
15 funding under one program shall not disqualify or otherwise
16 limit eligibility for funding under the other, provided that:

17 (1) funds are used in accordance with the requirements
18 of each respective program; and

19 (2) funds are not used to supplant existing federal
20 Head Start or Early Head Start funding, but may be used to
21 supplement and enhance workforce compensation and program
22 quality.

23 (Source: P.A. 103-8, eff. 6-7-23; 103-605, eff. 7-1-24.)