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SENATE BILL NO. 595

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services
on February 13, 1998)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Ticer)

A BILL requiring the Board of Social Services, the Department of Social Services, and the Department of Health to study the quality, affordability, and accessibility of licensed and unlicensed child day care programs in the Commonwealth.

1. § 1. That the State Board of Social Services, in cooperation with the Department of Social Services, the Health Department, and other state agencies as appropriate, shall study the quality, affordability, and accessibility of licensed and unlicensed child day care programs in the Commonwealth.

A. The study shall (i) examine quality of care mechanisms currently in place for child day care programs and providers, including, but not limited to, state and federal statutes and regulations and review by private accrediting bodies; (ii) assess the sufficiency of these mechanisms for ensuring quality and providing parents with a means of having their inquiries and complaints addressed; (iii) examine how the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health coordinate their roles for ensuring quality of child care and child day care in a manner which minimizes duplication of resources; and (iv) identify the appropriate role of the Department of Social Services and any other appropriate state agencies in monitoring the quality, affordability, and accessibility of child day care programs.

B. The study also shall consider whether changes in existing law or regulations are warranted with respect to quality, health, and safety standards for all child day care programs.

C. The Board of Social Services shall submit a report by October 1, 1998, to the Governor, the Commission on Early Childhood and Child Day Care Programs, and the General Assembly which, in addition to the matters to be reported on as set forth above, (i) recommends the appropriate role of the Commonwealth in monitoring and improving the quality, affordability and accessibility of care in child day care programs; (ii) recommends the Commonwealth's role in providing consumer information on child day care issues; and (iii) assesses the licensing and registration functions for individual and institutional child day care providers currently performed by the Department of Social Services.