

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4418

To increase the quality and supply of child care and lower child care costs
for families.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 15, 2025

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia (for himself, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. FIELDS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. TLAIB, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. STANSBURY, Ms. SALINAS, Mrs. McIVER, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. ANSARI, Mr. SWALWELL, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. FROST, Mr. CARSON, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. LATIMER, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. GARCIA of California, Ms. GOODLANDER, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Mr. THANEDAR, Ms. CROCKETT, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. UNDERWOOD, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. POCAN, Mrs. McCLAIN DELANEY, Mr. LIEU, Ms. McBRIDE, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. MCCLELLAN, Ms. McDONALD RIVET, Ms. ELFRETH, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCGARVEY, Ms. TOKUDA, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. KEATING, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. CHU, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. SIMON, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. LANDSMAN, Ms. ROSS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. NADLER, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mr. SUBRAMANYAM, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. TITUS, Ms. PETTERSEN, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Mr. MAGAZINER, Ms. SEWELL, Ms. BROWN, Mr. CASTEN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. BEYER, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, and Mr. AMO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To increase the quality and supply of child care and lower
child care costs for families.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Child Care for Work-
5 ing Families Act”.

6 **TITLE I—CHILD CARE AND**
7 **EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM**

8 **SEC. 101. BIRTH THROUGH FIVE CHILD CARE AND EARLY**
9 **LEARNING PROGRAM.**

10 (a) CHILD CARE DEFINITIONS.—The definitions in
11 section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block
12 Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n) shall apply to this
13 section, except as provided in subsection (b) and as other-
14 wise specified.

15 (b) ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16 (1) APPRENTICESHIP.—The term “apprentice-
17 ship” means an apprenticeship registered under the
18 Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the
19 “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chap-
20 ter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).

21 (2) CHILD CARE CERTIFICATE.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “child care
23 certificate” means a certificate (that may be a
24 check or other disbursement) that is issued by
25 a State, Tribal, territorial, or local government

1 under this section directly to a parent who shall
2 use such certificate only as payment for child
3 care services or as a deposit for child care serv-
4 ices if such a deposit is required of other chil-
5 dren being cared for by the provider.

6 (B) RULE.—Nothing in this section shall
7 preclude the use of such certificates for sec-
8 tarian child care services if freely chosen by the
9 parent. For the purposes of this section, child
10 care certificates shall be considered indirect
11 Federal financial assistance to the provider.

12 (3) CHILD EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.—
13 The term “child experiencing homelessness” means
14 an individual who is a homeless child or youth under
15 section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assist-
16 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a).

17 (4) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY.—The term “eligible
18 activity”, with respect to a parent, shall include, at
19 minimum, activities consisting of—

20 (A) full-time or part-time employment;

21 (B) self-employment;

22 (C) job search activities;

23 (D) secondary, postsecondary, or adult
24 education, including education through a pro-
25 gram of high school classes, a course of study

1 at an institution of higher education, classes to-
2 wards an equivalent of a high school diploma
3 recognized by State law, or English as a second
4 language classes;

5 (E) health treatment (including mental
6 health and substance use treatment) for a con-
7 dition that prevents the parent from partici-
8 pating in other eligible activities;

9 (F) activities to prevent child abuse and
10 neglect, or family violence prevention or inter-
11 vention activities;

12 (G) employment and training activities, in-
13 cluding job training, under the Workforce Inno-
14 vation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et
15 seq.); and

16 (H) taking leave under the Family and
17 Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2601 et
18 seq.) (or equivalent provisions for Federal em-
19 ployees), a State or local paid or unpaid leave
20 law, or a program of employer-provided leave.

21 (5) ELIGIBLE CHILD.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “eligible
23 child” means an individual—

24 (i) who is less than 6 years of age;

1 (ii) who is not yet in kindergarten;

2 and

3 (iii) who—

4 (I) resides with a parent or par-
5 ents who are participating in an eligi-
6 ble activity;

7 (II) is included in a population of
8 vulnerable children identified by the
9 lead agency involved, which at a min-
10 imum shall include children with dis-
11 abilities, infants and toddlers with dis-
12 abilities, children experiencing home-
13 lessness, children in foster care, chil-
14 dren in kinship care, children in a
15 family that is eligible for assistance
16 through the special supplemental nu-
17 trition assistance program for women,
18 infants, and children established by
19 section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act
20 of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786), a house-
21 hold that is eligible to receive assist-
22 ance through the supplemental nutri-
23 tion assistance program established
24 under the Food and Nutrition Act of
25 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), or a

1 family that is eligible to receive assist-
2 ance through the program of block
3 grants to States for temporary assist-
4 ance for needy families established
5 under part A of title IV of the Social
6 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.),
7 and children who are receiving, or
8 need to receive, child protective serv-
9 ices; or

10 (III) resides with—

11 (aa) a parent who is more
12 than 65 years of age;

13 (bb) a parent who is em-
14 ployed by an eligible child care
15 provider; or

16 (cc) a parent who is enrolled
17 in high school and has not ex-
18 ceeded the maximum age of en-
19 rollment in high school.

20 (B) LONGER-TERM PERIOD ELIGIBILITY.—

21 An individual who is determined to be an eligi-
22 ble child shall not be required to reverify eligi-
23 bility for purposes of this title during the period
24 after the determination and before the indi-

vidual becomes 6 years of age or enters kindergarten, whichever occurs earlier.

(6) ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “eligible child care provider” means a center-based child care provider, a family child care provider, or other provider of child care services for compensation that—

(i) is licensed to provide child care services under State law applicable to the child care services it provides or, in the case of an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization, meets the rules set by the Secretary;

(ii) participates in the State’s tiered system for recognizing and supporting the quality of child care services described in subsection (f)(3)(B), or, in the case of an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization, meets the rules set by the Secretary—

(I) not later than 4 years after the State first receives funds under this section; and

(II) for the remainder of the period for which the provider receives funds under this section; and

1 (iii) satisfies the State and local re-
2 quirements, including those requirements
3 described in section 658E(c)(2)(I) of the
4 Child Care and Development Block Grant
5 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)(2)(I)),
6 applicable to the child care services it pro-
7 vides.

8 (B) SPECIAL RULE.—A child care provider
9 who is eligible to provide child care services in
10 a State for children receiving assistance under
11 the Child Care and Development Block Grant
12 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.) on the
13 date the State submits an application for funds
14 under this section, and remains in compliance
15 with any licensing or registration standards, or
16 regulations, of the State, shall be deemed to be
17 an eligible child care provider under this section
18 for 3.5 years after the State first receives fund-
19 ing under this section.

20 (7) FMAP.—The term “FMAP” has the mean-
21 ing given the term “Federal medical assistance per-
22 centage” in the first sentence of section 1905(b) of
23 the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(b)).

24 (8) FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER.—The term
25 “family child care provider” means one or more indi-

viduals who provide child care services, in a private residence other than the residences of the children involved, for less than 24 hours per day per child, or for 24 hours per day per child due to the nature of the work of the parent involved.

(9) INCLUSIVE CARE.—The term “inclusive”, with respect to care (including child care), means care provided by an eligible child care provider—

(A) for whom the percentage of children served by the provider who are children with disabilities or infants or toddlers with disabilities reflects the prevalence of children with disabilities and infants and toddlers with disabilities (whichever the provider serves) among children within the State involved; and

(B) that provides care and full participation for children with disabilities and infants and toddlers with disabilities (whichever the provider serves) alongside children who are—

(i) not children with disabilities; and

(ii) not infants and toddlers with disabilities.

(10) INFANT OR TODDLER.—The term “infant or toddler” means an individual who is less than 3 years of age.

1 (11) INFANT OR TODDLER WITH A DIS-
2 ABILITY.—The term “infant or toddler with a dis-
3 ability” has the meaning given the term in section
4 632 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education
5 Act (20 U.S.C. 1432).

6 (12) LEAD AGENCY.—The term “lead agency”
7 means the agency designated under subsection (e).

8 (13) PROVIDER TYPE.—The term “provider
9 type” means a type that is—

10 (A) a center-based child care provider;

11 (B) a family child care provider; or

12 (C) another non-center-based child care
13 provider.

14 (14) RECOGNIZED POSTSECONDARY CREDEN-
15 TIAL.—The term “recognized postsecondary creden-
16 tial” has the meaning given the term in section 3 of
17 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29
18 U.S.C. 3102).

19 (15) STAFFED FAMILY CHILD CARE NET-
20 WORK.—The term “staffed family child care net-
21 work” means a nonprofit organization or nonprofit
22 cooperative—

23 (A) that may be a component of a child
24 care resource and referral organization;

1 (B) that has at least one paid staff mem-
2 ber; and

3 (C) that offers evidence-based professional
4 development, quality improvement support,
5 business support, and technical assistance, in-
6 cluding on achieving licensure as a child care
7 provider, to family child care providers.

8 (16) STATE.—The term “State” means any of
9 the 50 States and the District of Columbia.

10 (17) TERRITORY.—The term “territory” means
11 the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Is-
12 lands of the United States, Guam, American Samoa,
13 and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Is-
14 lands.

15 (c) APPROPRIATIONS.—

16 (1) ENTITLEMENT.—In addition to amounts
17 otherwise available, there is appropriated to the De-
18 partment of Health and Human Services, out of any
19 money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated,
20 such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal
21 years 2026 through 2031, for payments to States,
22 territories, and Indian Tribes and Tribal organiza-
23 tions, and for carrying out this section (other than
24 carrying out activities described in paragraph (2) or
25 (3)).

1 (2) GRANTS TO LOCALITIES; AWARDS TO HEAD
2 START AGENCIES.—In addition to amounts otherwise
3 available, there is appropriated to the Department of
4 Health and Human Services for fiscal year 2026,
5 out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise ap-
6 propriated, \$20,000,000,000, to remain available
7 until September 30, 2031, to carry out the programs
8 of grants to localities and awards to Head Start
9 agencies described in subsection (i).

10 (3) FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION.—In addition to
11 amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to
12 the Department of Health and Human Services for
13 fiscal year 2026, out of any money in the Treasury
14 not otherwise appropriated, \$1,300,000,000, to re-
15 main available until September 30, 2031, to carry
16 out subsections (k) and (l).

17 (d) ESTABLISHMENT OF BIRTH THROUGH FIVE
18 CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING ENTITLEMENT PRO-
19 GRAM.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized
21 to administer a child care and early learning entitle-
22 ment program under which an eligible child, in a
23 State, territory, or Indian Tribe, or served by a
24 Tribal organization with an approved application
25 under subsection (f) or (g), shall be provided an op-

1 portunity to obtain high-quality child care services,
2 subject to the requirements of this section.

3 (2) ASSISTANCE FOR EVERY ELIGIBLE
4 CHILD.—Beginning on October 1, 2026, every child
5 who applies for assistance under this section, who is
6 in a State with an approved application under sub-
7 section (f), or in a territory or Indian Tribe or
8 served by a Tribal organization with an approved
9 application under subsection (g), and who is deter-
10 mined, by a lead agency (or other entity designated
11 by a lead agency) for the State, territory, Indian
12 Tribe, or Tribal organization involved, following
13 standards and procedures established by the Sec-
14 retary by rule, to be an eligible child, shall be offered
15 and shall be entitled to receive assistance for direct
16 child care services in accordance with and subject to
17 the requirements and limitations of this section.

18 (e) LEAD AGENCY.—The Governor of a State or the
19 head of a territory or Indian Tribe, desiring for the State,
20 territory, or Indian tribe or a related tribal organization
21 to receive a payment under this section, shall designate
22 a lead agency (such as a State agency or joint interagency
23 office) to administer the child care program carried out
24 under this section.

25 (f) APPLICATIONS AND STATE PLANS.—

1 (1) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive as-
2 sistance under this section, a State shall prepare
3 and submit to the Secretary for approval an applica-
4 tion containing a State plan that meets the require-
5 ments under paragraph (3) and contains that infor-
6 mation.

7 (2) PERIOD COVERED BY PLAN.—A State plan
8 contained in the application shall be designed to be
9 implemented during a period of not more than 3
10 years.

11 (3) REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE PLANS.—The
12 Secretary shall award funds under this section to
13 States with an approved application that contains a
14 State plan, submitted under paragraph (1), at such
15 time, in such manner, and containing such informa-
16 tion as the Secretary shall by rule require, including,
17 at a minimum, the following:

18 (A) PAYMENT RATES AND COST ESTI-
19 MATION.—

20 (i) PAYMENT RATES.—The State plan
21 shall certify that payment rates for the
22 provision of direct child care services for
23 which assistance is provided in accordance
24 with this section for the period covered by

1 the plan, within 3 years after the State
2 first receives funds under this section—

3 (I) will be sufficient to meet the
4 cost of child care (including fixed
5 costs such as rent or mortgage and
6 salaries), and set (with pay being
7 paid) in accordance with a cost esti-
8 mation model or cost study described
9 in clause (ii) that is approved by the
10 Secretary; and

11 (II) will correspond to differences
12 in quality (including improved quality)
13 based on the State’s tiered system for
14 recognizing and supporting the quality
15 of child care services described in sub-
16 paragraph (B).

17 (ii) COST ESTIMATION.—Such State
18 plan shall—

19 (I) demonstrate that the State
20 has, after consulting with the entities
21 and administrators described in sub-
22 clause (II), developed and uses a sta-
23 tistically valid and reliable cost esti-
24 mation model or cost study for the
25 payment rates for direct child care

1 services in the State (that are suffi-
2 cient to cover providers' fixed costs
3 and take into account payments made
4 through BASE grants under title II),
5 for the cost of child care at each of
6 the tiers of the State's tiered system
7 for recognizing and supporting the
8 quality of child care services described
9 in subparagraph (B), and for vari-
10 ations in the cost of direct child care
11 services by geographic area, provider
12 type, and age of child, and the addi-
13 tional costs associated with providing
14 inclusive care;

15 (II) certify that the entities and
16 administrators consulted included the
17 State Advisory Council on Early
18 Childhood Education and Care des-
19 ignated or established in section
20 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start
21 Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i))
22 (including State Head Start collabora-
23 tion office directors), administrators
24 of local child care programs and Head
25 Start agencies, organizations rep-

1 representing child care directors, teach-
2 ers, and other staff, local child care
3 resource and referral organizations,
4 organizations representing parents of
5 children with disabilities and parents
6 of infants and toddlers with disabil-
7 ities, the State interagency coordi-
8 nating council established under sec-
9 tion 641 of the Individuals with Dis-
10 abilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.
11 1441), the State advisory panel estab-
12 lished under section 612(a)(21) of the
13 Individuals with Disabilities Edu-
14 cation Act (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(21)),
15 organizations and labor organizations
16 representing child care providers, and
17 other appropriate entities;

18 (III) certify that the State—

19 (aa) not later than 30 days
20 after finalizing the cost esti-
21 mation model or cost study, pub-
22 lished a detailed report con-
23 taining the child care costs esti-
24 mated with the cost estimation
25 model or cost study, and includ-

1 ing an explanation detailing how
2 the wage requirements described
3 in subclause (IV)(cc) were ap-
4 plied in the estimation of such
5 costs; and

6 (bb) not later than 60 days
7 after publishing the report, estab-
8 lished a system to receive public
9 comment on the report about
10 making changes to the cost esti-
11 mation model or cost study, pro-
12 vided an opportunity for the pub-
13 lic to comment on the report
14 through that system, and sub-
15 mitted the report to the Sec-
16 retary;

17 (IV) certify that the State's pay-
18 ment rates for direct child care serv-
19 ices for which assistance is provided
20 in accordance with this section—

21 (aa) are set (with pay being
22 paid) in accordance with the
23 most recent estimates from the
24 most recent cost estimation
25 model or cost study under sub-

1 clause (I), so that providers at
2 each tier of the tiered system for
3 recognizing and supporting the
4 quality of child care services de-
5 scribed in subparagraph (B) re-
6 ceive a payment that is sufficient
7 to fully meet the requirements of
8 such tier;

9 (bb) are set so as to provide
10 payments to providers not at the
11 top tier of the tiered system that
12 are sufficient to enable the pro-
13 viders to increase quality to meet
14 the requirements for the next
15 tier;

16 (cc) ensure adequate wages
17 for staff of child care providers
18 providing such direct child care
19 services that—

20 (AA) at a minimum,
21 provide a living wage for all
22 staff of such child care pro-
23 viders; and

24 (BB) are equivalent to
25 wages for elementary edu-

1 cators with similar creden-
2 tials and experience in the
3 State; and

4 (dd) are adjusted on an an-
5 nual basis for cost-of-living in-
6 creases to ensure those payment
7 rates remain sufficient to meet
8 the requirements of this section;

9 (V) certify that the State will up-
10 date, not less often than once every 3
11 years, the cost estimation model or
12 cost study, following the process and
13 in accordance with the requirements
14 of this subparagraph; and

15 (VI) certify that the State has es-
16 tablished a system for appeals of the
17 child care costs estimated with the
18 cost estimation model or cost study.

19 (iii) PAYMENT PRACTICES.—Such
20 State plan shall include an assurance that
21 the State will implement payment practices
22 that support the fixed costs of providing
23 direct child care services.

24 (B) TIERED SYSTEM FOR RECOGNIZING
25 AND SUPPORTING THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE

1 SERVICES.—Such State plan shall certify that
2 the State has implemented, or assure that the
3 State will develop or revise within 3 years after
4 first receiving funds under this section, with
5 input (from early childhood education and de-
6 velopment experts, from a diverse group of child
7 care providers of a variety of provider types,
8 from families, and from organizations rep-
9 resenting child care directors, teachers, and
10 other staff), a tiered system for recognizing and
11 supporting the quality of child care services for
12 which assistance is made available under this
13 section, and that are inclusive and appropriate
14 for such child care providers. Such tiered sys-
15 tem shall—

16 (i) include a set of standards, for de-
17 termining the tier of quality of a child care
18 provider, that—

19 (I) uses standards for a highest
20 tier that at a minimum are equivalent
21 to Head Start program performance
22 standards described in section
23 641A(a)(1)(B) of the Head Start Act
24 (42 U.S.C. 9836a(a)(1)(B)) or other

1 equivalent evidence-based standards
2 approved by the Secretary;

3 (II) includes quality indicators
4 and thresholds that are appropriate
5 for child development for different
6 types of provider types, including cen-
7 ter-based child care providers and
8 family child care providers, and are
9 appropriate for providers serving dif-
10 ferent age groups (including mixed
11 age groups) of children; and

12 (III) aligns standards for the
13 lowest tier with State licensing re-
14 quirements for child care providers
15 described in subparagraph (K);

16 (ii) include a different set of stand-
17 ards that includes indicators, when appro-
18 priate, for care during nontraditional hours
19 of operation; and

20 (iii) provide for sufficient resources
21 and supports for child care providers at
22 tiers lower than the highest tier to facili-
23 tate progression toward meeting higher
24 quality standards.

1 (C) ACHIEVING HIGH QUALITY FOR ALL
2 CHILDREN.—Such State plan shall certify the
3 State has implemented, or will implement with-
4 in 3 years after first receiving funds under this
5 section, policies and financing practices that
6 will ensure all eligible children can choose to at-
7 tend child care, with services provided by any of
8 a variety of provider types including family
9 child care providers, at the highest quality tier
10 within 10 years after the date of enactment of
11 this Act.

12 (D) NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF PRO-
13 VIDERS AT EACH TIER AND OTHER CHARACTER-
14 ISTICS.—Such plan shall provide information on
15 the number and percentage of eligible child care
16 providers, disaggregated (unless the
17 disaggregation involved would reveal personally
18 identifiable information about an individual pro-
19 vider or child) by—

20 (i) the tier of a provider's services on
21 the State's tiered system for recognizing
22 and supporting the quality of child care
23 services described in subparagraph (B);

24 (ii) the primary language of the pro-
25 vider;

- 1 (iii) the race and ethnicity of the chil-
2 dren served;
3 (iv) the age of the children;
4 (v) the disability status of the chil-
5 dren; and
6 (vi) the primary language of the chil-
7 dren.

8 (E) COMPENSATION.—Such plan shall pro-
9 vide a certification that the State has or will
10 have within 3 years after first receiving funds
11 under this section, a wage ladder for staff of el-
12 igible child care providers receiving assistance
13 under this section, including a certification that
14 wages for such staff, at a minimum, will meet
15 the requirements of subparagraph
16 (A)(ii)(IV)(cc).

17 (F) SLIDING FEE SCALE FOR COPAY-
18 MENTS.—

19 (i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided
20 in clause (ii)(I), the State plan shall pro-
21 vide an assurance that the State will for
22 the period covered by the plan use a slid-
23 ing fee scale, which shall gradually in-
24 crease copayments as a percentage of fam-
25 ily income for families with greater family

1 incomes as described in clause (ii), to de-
2 termine a copayment for a family receiving
3 assistance under this section (or, for a
4 family receiving part-time care, a reduced
5 copayment that is the proportionate
6 amount of the full copayment).

7 (ii) SLIDING FEE SCALE.—A full co-
8 payment described in clause (i) shall be de-
9 termined using a sliding fee scale that pro-
10 vides that, for a family with a family in-
11 come—

12 (I) of not more than 85 percent
13 of the State median income for a fam-
14 ily of the same size, the family shall
15 not pay a copayment, toward the cost
16 of the child care involved for all eligi-
17 ble children in the family;

18 (II) of more than 85 percent but
19 not more than 100 percent of the
20 State median income for a family of
21 the same size, the copayment shall be
22 more than 0 but not more than 2 per-
23 cent of that family income, toward
24 such cost for all such children;

1 (III) of more than 100 percent
2 but not more than 125 percent of the
3 State median income for a family of
4 the same size, the copayment shall be
5 more than 2 but not more than 4 per-
6 cent of that family income, toward
7 such cost for all such children;

8 (IV) of more than 125 percent
9 but not more than 150 percent of the
10 State median income for a family of
11 the same size, the copayment shall be
12 more than 4 but not more than 7 per-
13 cent of that family income, toward
14 such cost for all such children; and

15 (V) of more than 150 percent of
16 the State median income for a family
17 of the same size, the copayment shall
18 be 7 percent of that family income, to-
19 ward such cost for all such children.

20 (G) PROHIBITION ON CHARGING MORE
21 THAN COPAYMENT.—The State plan shall cer-
22 tify that, after the State develops and uses the
23 cost estimation model or cost study described in
24 subparagraph (A)(ii), the State will not permit
25 a child care provider receiving financial assist-

1 ance under this section to charge, for direct
2 child care services for an eligible child, more
3 than the total of—

4 (i) the financial assistance provided
5 for the child under this section; and

6 (ii) any applicable copayment pursu-
7 ant to subparagraph (F).

8 (H) REDUCTION OF BARRIERS.—The State
9 plan shall assure that each child who receives
10 assistance under this section will be considered
11 to meet all eligibility requirements for such as-
12 sistance, and will receive such assistance, for
13 not less than 12 months unless the child has
14 aged out of the program, and the child’s eligi-
15 bility determination and redetermination, in-
16 cluding any determination based on the State’s
17 definition of eligible activities, shall be imple-
18 mented in a manner that supports child well-
19 being and reduces barriers to enrollment, in-
20 cluding continuity of services.

21 (I) POLICIES TO SUPPORT ACCESS TO
22 CHILD CARE FOR UNDERSERVED POPU-
23 LATIONS.—The State plan shall demonstrate
24 that the State will prioritize increasing access
25 to, and the quality and the supply of, child care

1 in the State for underserved populations, in-
2 cluding at a minimum, children from low-in-
3 come families, children in underserved areas, in-
4 fants and toddlers, children with disabilities and
5 infants and toddlers with disabilities, children
6 who are dual language learners, children experi-
7 encing homelessness, children in foster or kin-
8 ship care, children who receive care during non-
9 traditional hours, and vulnerable children as de-
10 fined by the lead agency pursuant to subsection
11 (b)(5)(A)(iii)(II).

12 (J) POLICIES.—The State plan shall in-
13 clude a certification that the State will apply,
14 under this section, the policies and procedures
15 described in subparagraphs (A), (B), (I), (J),
16 (K)(i), (R), and (U) of section 658E(c)(2) of
17 the Child Care and Development Block Grant
18 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)(2)), and the
19 policies and procedures described in section
20 658H of such Act (42 U.S.C. 9858f), to child
21 care services provided under this section.

22 (K) LICENSING.—

23 (i) CONSULTATION.—The State plan
24 shall demonstrate that the State has con-
25 sulted or will consult with organizations

(including labor organizations and child care and early learning organizations) representing eligible child care providers (including family child care providers), child care associations, child care directors, teachers, or other staff (including directors, teachers, or staff from child care providers serving higher proportions of underserved populations as identified under subparagraph (I)), early childhood education and development experts, maternal and child health experts, and families in the development of licensing standards described in this subparagraph, including identifying barriers to such licensing for child care providers who are exempt from such licensing under the Child Care and Development Block Grant of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.).

(ii) LICENSING STANDARDS.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—The State plan shall certify that the State will develop or revise, within 2.5 years after first receiving funds under this section, licensing standards appro-

1 priate for child care providers of a va-
2 riety of provider types and provider
3 sizes (which may, when appropriate,
4 include a different set of licensing
5 standards with respect to care during
6 nontraditional hours of operation) and
7 a pathway to licensure described in
8 this clause that is available to and ap-
9 propriate for such child care pro-
10 viders, that will offer providers eligible
11 under the Child Care and Develop-
12 ment Block Grant Act of 1990 (42
13 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.) a reasonable
14 pathway to become eligible providers
15 under this section, and that will as-
16 sure an adequate supply of child care.

17 (II) DETERMINATION.—For pur-
18 poses of subclause (I), provider size
19 shall be determined by measuring the
20 number of children served by the pro-
21 vider.

22 (iii) TIMELINE.—Such plan shall de-
23 scribe the timeline the State will use to en-
24 sure sufficient time for providers described
25 in subsection (b)(6)(B) to comply with

1 such licensing standards in order to remain
2 eligible providers after 3.5 years after the
3 State first receives funding under this sec-
4 tion.

5 (iv) FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PRO-
6 VIDERS.—Such plan shall describe how the
7 State will use funds reserved under sub-
8 section (h)(3)(A) to enable a variety of
9 provider types to achieve licensure, includ-
10 ing paying for the costs of required back-
11 ground checks, health screening, and initial
12 and ongoing training, and other costs asso-
13 ciated with achieving licensure.

14 (L) PROHIBITION ON SUSPENSIONS, EX-
15 PULSIONS, AND AVERSIVE BEHAVIORAL INTER-
16 VENTIONS.—The State plan shall provide an as-
17 surance that the State will—

18 (i) provide assistance to carry out this
19 section only to eligible child care providers
20 that prohibit—

21 (I) the use of suspension and ex-
22 pulsion of children; and

23 (II) the use of aversive behavioral
24 interventions; and

1 (ii) provide training resources to eligi-
 2 ble child care providers and information to
 3 families to support the prohibition of prac-
 4 tices described in subclauses (I) and (II) of
 5 clause (i).

6 (M) MULTITIERED SYSTEMS OF SUP-
 7 PORT.—The State plan shall provide an assur-
 8 ance that the State will provide assistance to el-
 9 igible child care providers to implement multi-
 10 tiered systems of support such as systems with
 11 positive behavioral interventions and supports,
 12 infant and early childhood mental health con-
 13 sultation and trauma-informed care that pro-
 14 mote positive social and emotional development
 15 and reduce challenging behaviors.

16 (N) ENROLLMENT PRACTICES.—

17 (i) IN GENERAL.—The State plan
 18 shall describe how the lead agency will en-
 19 sure that families have access to a low-bar-
 20 rier enrollment (including reenrollment)
 21 process that is accessible to and minimizes
 22 burdens for families with diverse character-
 23 istics, by implementing activities such as
 24 allowing for simplified enrollment for sib-
 25 lings, coordinating with other State agen-

1 cies to streamline enrollment processes
2 across public assistance programs, requir-
3 ing minimal paperwork, allowing for enroll-
4 ment through a State or local website, and
5 providing flexible submission deadlines.

6 (ii) DEFINITION.—In this subpara-
7 graph, the term “family with diverse char-
8 acteristics” includes families with adults
9 with disabilities, with children with disabil-
10 ities, or with infants and toddlers with dis-
11 abilities, families experiencing homeless-
12 ness, families with limited access to inter-
13 net connectivity, families living in rural
14 areas, families of dual language learners,
15 and families with children in underserved
16 populations identified under subparagraph
17 (I).

18 (O) IMPLEMENTATION FOR LOW-INCOME
19 FAMILIES.—The State plan shall include a cer-
20 tification that the applicant, not later than Oc-
21 tober 1, 2026, will provide assistance described
22 in subsection (d)(2) to every child in the State
23 who is described in that subsection, and is from
24 a family with a family income of not more than
25 85 percent of the State median income for a

1 family of the same size, before the applicant ex-
2 pands the program involved to provide such as-
3 sistance to children from additional families.

4 (g) PAYMENTS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years
6 2026 through 2031:

7 (A) CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGI-
8 BLE CHILDREN.—

9 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
10 pay to each State with an approved appli-
11 cation under subsection (f), and that State
12 shall be entitled to, an amount for each
13 quarter equal to 90 percent of expendi-
14 tures (which shall be the Federal share of
15 such expenditures) in the quarter for direct
16 child care services described under sub-
17 section (h)(2) for eligible children.

18 (ii) EXCEPTION.—Funds reserved
19 from the total under subsection (h)(3)
20 shall be subject to subparagraph (B).

21 (iii) PROHIBITION.—Activities de-
22 scribed in subparagraph (B) or (C) may
23 not be included in the cost of direct child
24 care services described in this subpara-
25 graph.

1 (B) ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY
2 AND SUPPLY OF CHILD CARE SERVICES.—The
3 Secretary shall pay to each State with such an
4 approved application, and that State shall be
5 entitled to, the FMAP of expenditures (which
6 shall be the Federal share of such expenditures)
7 to carry out activities to improve the quality
8 and supply of child care services under sub-
9 section (h)(3) subject to the limit specified in
10 subparagraph (A) of such subsection.

11 (C) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary
12 shall pay to each State with such an approved
13 application, and that State shall be entitled to,
14 an amount equal to 50 percent of expenditures
15 (which shall be the Federal share of such ex-
16 penditures) for the costs of administration in-
17 curred by the State—

18 (i) which shall include costs incurred
19 by the State in carrying out the child care
20 program established in this section; and

21 (ii) which may include, at the option
22 of the State, costs associated with carrying
23 out requirements, policies, and procedures
24 described in section 658H of the Child

1 Care and Development Block Grant Act of
2 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858f).

3 (2) ADVANCE PAYMENT; RETROSPECTIVE AD-
4 JUSTMENT.—For each of fiscal years 2026 through
5 2031, the Secretary shall make payments under this
6 subsection for a period on the basis of advance esti-
7 mates of expenditures submitted by the State and
8 such other investigation as the Secretary may find
9 necessary, and shall reduce or increase the payments
10 as necessary to adjust for any overpayment or un-
11 derpayment for previous periods. No interest shall
12 be charged or paid on any amount due because of
13 an overpayment or underpayment for previous peri-
14 ods.

15 (3) TERRITORIES AND TRIBES.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years
17 2026 through 2031, from amounts appropriated
18 under subsection (c)(1) the Secretary shall
19 make payments to territories, and Indian
20 Tribes and Tribal organizations, as the case
21 may be, with applications submitted as de-
22 scribed in subparagraph (B), and approved by
23 the Secretary for the purpose of carrying out
24 the child care program described in this section,
25 consistent, to the extent practicable as deter-

1 mined by the Secretary (subject to subsection
2 (d)(2)), with the requirements applicable to
3 States.

4 (B) APPLICATIONS.—

5 (i) TRIBAL APPLICATIONS.—An In-
6 dian Tribe or Tribal organization seeking a
7 payment under this paragraph shall submit
8 an application to the Secretary at such
9 time, in such manner, and containing such
10 information as the Secretary may specify,
11 including—

12 (I) a certification described in
13 subsection (f)(3)(O), except that each
14 reference in the subsection to “child
15 in the State” shall be considered to be
16 a reference to “child served by the In-
17 dian Tribe or Tribal organization, as
18 the case may be,”; and

19 (II) an agreement to collect data
20 and provide reports under subsection
21 (n).

22 (ii) TERRITORIAL APPLICATIONS.—A
23 territory seeking a payment under this
24 paragraph shall submit an application to
25 the Secretary at such time, in such man-

ner, and containing such information as
the Secretary may specify, including—

(I) a certification described in
subsection (f)(3)(O), except that each
reference in the subsection to “child
in the State” shall be considered to be
a reference to “child in the territory”;
and

(II) an agreement to collect data
and provide reports under subsection
(n).

(C) AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall make
the payments to the territories, Indian Tribes,
and Tribal organizations described in subpara-
graph (A) on the basis of their relative need.
Each entity that is such a territory, Indian
Tribe, or Tribal organization shall be entitled to
such a payment as may be necessary to carry
out the activities described in subsection (h),
and to pay for the costs of administration in-
curred by the entity, which shall include costs
incurred by the entity in carrying out the child
care program, and which may include, at the
option of the entity, costs associated with car-
rying out requirements, policies, and procedures

1 described in section 658H of the Child Care
2 and Development Block Grant Act of 1990.

3 (h) USE OF FUNDS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Starting on October 1,
5 2026, a State shall use amounts provided to the
6 State under subsection (g) for direct child care serv-
7 ices (provided on a sliding fee scale basis), activities
8 to improve the quality and supply of child care serv-
9 ices consistent with paragraph (3), and State admin-
10 istration consistent with subsection (g)(1)(C).

11 (2) CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGIBLE
12 CHILDREN.—

13 (A) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years
14 2026 through 2031, from payments made to
15 the State under subsection (g) for that par-
16 ticular fiscal year, the State shall ensure that
17 parents of eligible children can access direct
18 child care services provided by an eligible child
19 care provider under this section through a
20 grant or contract as described in subparagraph
21 (B) or a certificate as described in subpara-
22 graph (C).

23 (B) GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.—The State
24 shall award grants or contracts to eligible child
25 care providers, consistent with the requirements

1 under this section, for the provision of child
2 care services for eligible children under this sec-
3 tion that, at a minimum, support providers' op-
4 erating expenses to meet and sustain health,
5 safety, quality, wage, and licensing standards
6 required under this section.

7 (C) CERTIFICATES.—The State shall issue
8 a child care certificate directly to a parent who
9 shall use such certificate only as payment for
10 direct child care services or as a deposit for di-
11 rect child care services if such a deposit is re-
12 quired of other children being cared for by the
13 provider, consistent with the requirements
14 under this section.

15 (3) ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND
16 SUPPLY OF CHILD CARE SERVICES.—

17 (A) QUALITY CHILD CARE ACTIVITIES.—

18 (i) AMOUNT.—For each of fiscal years
19 2026 through 2031, from the total of the
20 payments made to the State for a par-
21 ticular fiscal year, the State shall reserve
22 and use a quality child care amount equal
23 to not less than 5 percent and not more
24 than 10 percent of the amount made avail-

1 able to the State through such payments
2 for the previous fiscal year.

3 (ii) USE OF QUALITY CHILD CARE
4 AMOUNT.—Each State shall use the quality
5 child care amount described in clause (i) to
6 implement activities described in this para-
7 graph to improve the quality and supply of
8 child care services by eligible child care
9 providers, and increase the number of
10 available slots in the State for child care
11 services funded under this section,
12 prioritizing assistance for child care pro-
13 viders who are in underserved communities
14 and who are providing, or are seeking to
15 provide, child care services for underserved
16 populations identified under subsection
17 (f)(3)(I).

18 (iii) ADMINISTRATION.—Activities
19 funded under this paragraph may be ad-
20 ministered—

21 (I) directly by the lead agency; or

22 (II) through other State govern-
23 ment agencies, local or regional child
24 care resource and referral organiza-
25 tions, community development finan-

1 cial institutions, other intermediaries
2 with experience supporting child care
3 providers, or other appropriate enti-
4 ties that enter into a contract with the
5 State to provide such assistance.

6 (B) QUALITY AND SUPPLY ACTIVITIES.—
7 Activities funded under the quality child care
8 amount described in subparagraph (A) shall in-
9 clude each of the following:

10 (i) STARTUP GRANTS AND SUPPLY EX-
11 PANSION GRANTS.—

12 (I) IN GENERAL.—From a por-
13 tion of the quality child care amount,
14 a State shall make startup and supply
15 expansion grants to support child care
16 providers who are providing, or seek-
17 ing to provide, child care services to
18 children receiving assistance under
19 this section, with priority for pro-
20 viders providing or seeking to provide
21 child care in underserved communities
22 and for underserved populations iden-
23 tified under subsection (f)(3)(I), to—

24 (aa) support startup and ex-
25 pansion costs; and

1 (bb) assist such providers in
2 meeting health and safety re-
3 quirements, achieving licensure,
4 conducting background checks,
5 and meeting requirements in the
6 State's tiered system for recog-
7 nizing and supporting the quality
8 of child care services described in
9 subsection (f)(3)(B).

10 (II) REQUIREMENT.—As a condi-
11 tion of receiving a startup or supply
12 expansion grant under this clause, a
13 child care provider shall commit to
14 meeting the requirements of an eligi-
15 ble provider under this section, and
16 providing child care services to chil-
17 dren receiving assistance under this
18 section on an ongoing basis.

19 (ii) QUALITY GRANTS.—From a por-
20 tion of the quality child care amount, a
21 State shall provide quality grants to sup-
22 port eligible child care providers in pro-
23 viding child care services to children receiv-
24 ing assistance under this section to im-

1 prove the quality of such providers, includ-
2 ing—

3 (I) supporting such providers in
4 meeting or making progress toward
5 the requirements for the highest tier
6 of the State’s tiered system for recog-
7 nizing and supporting the quality of
8 child care services described in sub-
9 section (f)(3)(B); and

10 (II) supporting such providers in
11 sustaining child care quality, including
12 supporting increased wages for staff
13 and supporting payment of fixed
14 costs.

15 (iii) FACILITIES GRANTS.—From a
16 portion of the quality child care amount, a
17 State shall provide support, including
18 through awarding facilities grants, for an
19 activity (referred to in this subparagraph
20 as a “covered activity”) consisting of re-
21 modeling, renovation, or repair of a build-
22 ing or facility, or for construction, perma-
23 nent improvement, or major renovation of
24 a building or facility primarily used for

1 providing direct child care services, in ac-
2 cordance with the following:

3 (I) RECIPIENTS.—The facilities
4 grants shall be awarded to eligible
5 child care providers with submitted or
6 approved applications under sub-
7 section (f) or (g) or to intermediaries
8 with experience supporting child care
9 providers in order to enable the inter-
10 mediaries to assist such eligible child
11 care providers with covered activities.

12 (II) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible
13 to receive funds through a facilities
14 grant under this clause, a child care
15 provider shall enter into an agreement
16 with the State in which the provider
17 commits to use the funds only after
18 obtaining approval of an application
19 under subsection (f) or (g) and com-
20 mits to provide child care services to
21 children receiving assistance under
22 this section on an ongoing basis.

23 (III) FEDERAL INTEREST APPLI-
24 CATION.—Provisions of Federal law
25 relating to a Federal interest in a

1 building or facility shall not apply to
2 a covered activity for privately owned
3 family child care homes under this
4 clause.

5 (IV) FEDERAL INTEREST DURA-
6 TION.—The Secretary shall not retain
7 a Federal interest after a period of 10
8 years in any building, or facility, at
9 which a covered activity was carried
10 out with funds awarded under this
11 clause.

12 (V) RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS AND
13 FACILITIES.—Eligible child care pro-
14 viders may not use funds for buildings
15 or facilities that are used primarily
16 for sectarian instruction or religious
17 worship.

18 (VI) FAMILY CHILD CARE
19 HOMES.—The Secretary shall develop
20 parameters on the use of funds under
21 this clause for family child care
22 homes.

23 (iv) STATE ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE
24 THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE SERVICES.—
25 A State shall use a portion of the quality

1 child care amount to improve the quality of
2 child care services available under this sec-
3 tion, which shall include—

4 (I) supporting the training of the
5 early childhood workforce, which shall
6 include supporting—

7 (aa) degree attainment;

8 (bb) high-quality training
9 programs that lead to a recog-
10 nized postsecondary credential; or

11 (cc) the development and
12 implementation of apprenticeship
13 programs;

14 (II) supporting the professional
15 development of the early childhood
16 workforce through continued edu-
17 cation and credentialing;

18 (III) developing, implementing,
19 or revising the State’s tiered system
20 for recognizing and supporting the
21 quality of child care services described
22 in subsection (f)(3)(B);

23 (IV) improving the supply and
24 quality of developmentally appropriate
25 and inclusive child care programs and

1 services for underserved populations
2 identified under subsection (f)(3)(I);

3 (V) improving access to child
4 care services for vulnerable children
5 as defined by the lead agency pursu-
6 ant to subsection (b)(5)(A)(iii)(II);

7 (VI) providing outreach and en-
8 rollment support for families of eligi-
9 ble children;

10 (VII) supporting eligible child
11 care providers to eliminate use of sus-
12 pensions, expulsions, and aversive be-
13 havioral interventions, including
14 through adaptations and interventions
15 by special educators, mental health
16 consultants, and other community re-
17 source personnel, such as behavior
18 coaches, psychologists, and other ap-
19 propriate specialists, and through the
20 provision of mental health services for
21 the providers;

22 (VIII) promoting multitiered sys-
23 tems of support such as systems with
24 positive behavioral interventions and
25 supports and trauma-informed care

1 that promote positive social and emo-
2 tional development and reduce chal-
3 lenging behaviors;

4 (IX) offering training, coaching,
5 or professional development opportu-
6 nities for eligible child care providers
7 that relate to the use of evidence-
8 based, developmentally appropriate
9 and age-appropriate strategies to pro-
10 mote the social, emotional, physical,
11 adaptive, communication, and cog-
12 nitive development of children;

13 (X) improving coordination be-
14 tween States and local governments
15 with respect to licensing and other
16 regulatory requirements for eligible
17 child care providers;

18 (XI) increasing interrater reli-
19 ability concerning licensing inspections
20 or other evaluations of eligible child
21 care providers by training licensing in-
22 spectors of the providers and pro-
23 viding such inspectors with additional
24 professional development;

1 (XII) identifying and eliminating
2 barriers to licensing of eligible child
3 care providers, such as through reduc-
4 ing fees for background checks, trans-
5 lating licensing regulations into lan-
6 guages other than English, and col-
7 laborating with housing agencies or
8 local governments; and

9 (XIII) establishing or supporting
10 a system of local or regional child care
11 resource and referral organizations
12 that is coordinated, to the extent de-
13 termined appropriate by the State, by
14 a statewide public or private non-
15 profit, community-based or regionally
16 based, lead child care resource and re-
17 ferral organization, as described in
18 section 658E(c)(3)(B)(iii) of the Child
19 Care and Development Block Grant
20 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
21 9858e(c)(3)(B)(iii)).

22 (v) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—From a
23 portion of the quality child care amount
24 described in subparagraph (A), the State,
25 in coordination with local governments and

1 staffed family child care networks as ap-
2 propriate, shall provide technical assistance
3 to increase the supply of eligible child care
4 providers in the State, such as—

5 (I) providing business startup
6 support;

7 (II) conducting outreach to re-
8 cruit new child care providers and in-
9 form such providers about the oppor-
10 tunities provided under this title, in-
11 cluding support for participation in
12 the tiered system for recognizing and
13 supporting the quality of child care
14 services described in subsection
15 (f)(3)(B);

16 (III) providing support to enable
17 providers to achieve licensure (includ-
18 ing providing support for child care
19 providers operating legally without a
20 child care license to obtain such li-
21 cense, such as providing, for individ-
22 uals seeking a child care license, pre-
23 licensing orientation and technical as-
24 sistance throughout the child care li-
25 censing process);

1 (IV) offering orientations for new
2 child care providers including orienta-
3 tions explaining support under pro-
4 grams such as the child and adult
5 care food program established under
6 section 17 of the Richard B. Russell
7 National School Lunch Act (42
8 U.S.C. 1766); and

9 (V) supporting the development
10 of shared service models for child care
11 programs.

12 (i) GRANTS TO LOCALITIES AND AWARDS TO HEAD
13 START PROGRAMS.—

14 (1) ELIGIBLE LOCALITY DEFINED.—In this
15 subsection, the term “eligible locality” means a city,
16 county, or other unit of general local government.

17 (2) GRANTS TO LOCALITIES.—

18 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use
19 funds appropriated under subsection (c)(2) to
20 award local Birth Through Five Child Care and
21 Early Learning Grants, as determined by the
22 Secretary, to eligible localities located in States
23 that have not received payments under sub-
24 section (g). The Secretary shall award the
25 grants to eligible localities in such a State from

1 the allotment made for that State under sub-
2 paragraph (B).

3 (B) ALLOTMENTS.—

4 (i) POVERTY LINE DEFINED.—In this
5 subparagraph, the term “poverty line”
6 means the poverty line defined and revised
7 as described in section 673 of the Commu-
8 nity Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C.
9 9902).

10 (ii) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—For each
11 State described in subparagraph (A), the
12 Secretary shall allot for the State for a fis-
13 cal year an amount that bears the same re-
14 lationship to the funds appropriated under
15 subsection (c)(2) and available to carry out
16 this paragraph for the fiscal year as the
17 number of children from families with fam-
18 ily incomes that are at or below 200 per-
19 cent of the poverty line, and who are under
20 the age of 6, in the State bears to the total
21 number of all such children in all States
22 described in subparagraph (A).

23 (C) APPLICATION.—To receive a grant
24 from the corresponding State allotment under
25 subparagraph (B), an eligible locality shall sub-

1 mit an application to the Secretary at such
2 time, in such manner, and containing such in-
3 formation as the Secretary may require. The re-
4 quirements for the application shall, to the
5 greatest extent practicable, be consistent with
6 the State plan requirements applicable to States
7 under subsection (f).

8 (D) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall
9 specify the requirements for an eligible locality
10 to provide access to child care, which child care
11 requirements shall, to the greatest extent prac-
12 ticable, be consistent with the requirements ap-
13 plicable to States under this section.

14 (E) RECOUPMENT OF UNUSED FUNDS.—
15 Notwithstanding any other provision of this sec-
16 tion, for each of fiscal years 2027 through
17 2031, the Secretary shall have the authority to
18 recoup any unused funds allotted under sub-
19 paragraph (B) for awards under paragraph
20 (3)(A) to Head Start agencies in accordance
21 with paragraph (3).

22 (3) HEAD START EXPANSION IN NONPARTICI-
23 PATING STATES.—

24 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use
25 funds appropriated under subsection (c)(2) or

1 recouped under paragraph (2) to make awards
2 to Head Start agencies in a State described in
3 paragraph (2)(A) to carry out the purposes of
4 the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) in
5 such State.

6 (B) RULE.—For purposes of carrying out
7 the Head Start Act in circumstances not involv-
8 ing awards under this paragraph, funds award-
9 ed under subparagraph (A) shall not be in-
10 cluded in the calculation of a “base grant” as
11 such term is defined in section 640(a)(7)(A) of
12 the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9835(a)(7)(A)).

13 (C) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the
14 term “Head Start agency” means an entity des-
15 ignated or eligible to be designated as a Head
16 Start agency under section 641(a)(1) of the
17 Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9836(a)(1)) or as
18 an Early Head Start agency (by receiving a
19 grant) under section 645A(a) of such Act (42
20 U.S.C. 9840a).

21 (4) PRIORITY FOR SERVING UNDERSERVED
22 POPULATIONS.—In making determinations to award
23 a grant or make an award under this subsection, the
24 Secretary shall give priority to entities serving a

1 high percentage of individuals from underserved
2 populations identified under subsection (f)(3)(I).

3 (j) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—

4 (1) NONDISCRIMINATION.—The following provi-
5 sions of law shall apply to any program or activity
6 that receives funds provided under this section:

7 (A) Title IX of the Education Amendments
8 of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.).

9 (B) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of
10 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.).

11 (C) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
12 of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794).

13 (D) The Americans with Disabilities Act of
14 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

15 (2) PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY
16 REQUIREMENTS.—No individual shall be determined,
17 by the Secretary, a State, or another recipient of
18 funds under this section, to be ineligible for child
19 care services provided under this section, except on
20 the basis of eligibility requirements specified in or
21 under this section.

22 (3) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives
24 payments under this section for a fiscal year, in
25 using the funds made available through the

1 payments, shall maintain the expenditures of
2 the State for child care services at the average
3 level of such expenditures by the State for the
4 3 preceding fiscal years.

5 (B) COUNTING RULE.—State expenditures
6 counted for purposes of meeting the require-
7 ment in subparagraph (A) may also be counted
8 for purposes of meeting the requirement to pro-
9 vide a non-Federal share under subparagraph
10 (A), (B), or (C), as appropriate, of subsection
11 (g)(1).

12 (4) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Funds re-
13 ceived under this section shall be used to supplement
14 and not supplant other Federal, State, and local
15 public funds expended to provide child care services
16 in the State on the date of enactment of this Act,
17 calculated as the average amount of such Federal,
18 State, and local public funds expended for fiscal
19 years 2023, 2024, and 2025.

20 (5) ALLOWABLE SOURCES OF NON-FEDERAL
21 SHARE.—For purposes of providing the non-Federal
22 share required under subsection (g)(1), a State's
23 non-Federal share—

24 (A) for direct child care services described
25 in subsection (g)(1)(A)—

1 (i) shall not include contributions
2 being used as a non-Federal share or
3 match for another Federal award; and

4 (ii) shall be provided from State or
5 local sources, contributions from philan-
6 thropy or other private organizations, or a
7 combination of such sources and contribu-
8 tions; and

9 (B) for activities to improve the quality
10 and supply of child care services described in
11 subsection (g)(1)(B), and administration de-
12 scribed in subsection (g)(1)(C)—

13 (i) shall not include contributions
14 being used as a non-Federal share or
15 match for another Federal award;

16 (ii) shall be provided from State or
17 local sources, contributions from philan-
18 thropy or other private organizations, or a
19 combination of such sources and contribu-
20 tions; and

21 (iii) may be in cash or in-kind, fairly
22 evaluated, including facilities or property,
23 equipment, or services.

24 (k) MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT.—

1 (1) REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIRE-
2 MENTS AND STATE PLAN.—The Secretary shall re-
3 view and monitor compliance of States, territories,
4 Tribal entities, and local entities with this section
5 and State compliance with the State plan described
6 in subsection (f)(3).

7 (2) ISSUANCE OF RULE.—The Secretary shall
8 establish by rule procedures for—

9 (A) receiving, processing, and determining
10 the validity of complaints or findings concerning
11 any failure of a State to comply with the State
12 plan or any other requirement of this section;

13 (B) notifying a State when the Secretary
14 has determined there has been a failure by the
15 State to comply with a requirement of this sec-
16 tion; and

17 (C) imposing sanctions under this sub-
18 section for such a failure.

19 (l) FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION.—Using funds appro-
20 priated under subsection (c)(3), the Secretary shall carry
21 out administration of this section, shall provide (including
22 through the use of grants or cooperative agreements) tech-
23 nical assistance to States, territories, Indian Tribes, and
24 Tribal organizations, and shall carry out research and
25 evaluations related to this section.

1 (m) NONPOSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM.—

2 For purposes of section 401 of the Act entitled “An Act
3 to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(a)(1)
4 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year
5 1997”, approved August 22, 1996, the program carried
6 out under this section shall be considered to be a program
7 of nonpostsecondary education.

8 (n) REPORTS.—

9 (1) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION BY
10 STATES.—

11 (A) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives
12 funds to carry out this section shall collect the
13 information described in subparagraph (B) on a
14 monthly basis.

15 (B) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—The infor-
16 mation required to be collected under this sub-
17 paragraph shall consist of, with respect to a
18 family receiving assistance under this section,
19 information concerning—

20 (i) family income;

21 (ii) county (or comparable local juris-
22 diction) of residence;

23 (iii) the gender, race and ethnicity,
24 and age of each child receiving such assist-
25 ance;

1 (iv) whether the head of the family is
2 a single parent;

3 (v) the number of months the family
4 has received such assistance;

5 (vi) the provider type with which the
6 child was enrolled;

7 (vii) the amount of the copayment
8 paid for child care provided under this sec-
9 tion;

10 (viii) the average hours per month of
11 such care, during the period for which such
12 information is required to be submitted;
13 and

14 (ix) whether the children receiving as-
15 sistance under this section are either chil-
16 dren with disabilities or infants and tod-
17 dlers with disabilities.

18 (C) SUBMISSION TO THE SECRETARY.—A
19 State described in subparagraph (A) shall, on a
20 quarterly basis, submit the information required
21 to be collected under subparagraph (B) to the
22 Secretary.

23 (D) USE OF SAMPLES.—

24 (i) AUTHORITY.—A State may comply
25 with the requirement to collect the infor-

1 mation described in subparagraph (B)
2 through the use of disaggregated case
3 record information for a sample of families
4 selected through the use of scientifically
5 acceptable sampling methods approved by
6 the Secretary.

7 (ii) SAMPLING AND OTHER METH-
8 ODS.—The Secretary shall provide the
9 States with such case record sampling
10 plans and data collection procedures as the
11 Secretary determines to be necessary to
12 produce statistically valid samples of the
13 information described in subparagraph
14 (B). The Secretary may develop and imple-
15 ment procedures for verifying the quality
16 of the data submitted by the States.

17 (E) PROHIBITION.—Reports submitted to
18 the Secretary under subparagraph (C) shall not
19 contain personally identifiable information.

20 (2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year
21 after the date of enactment of the Child Care for
22 Working Families Act, and annually thereafter, a
23 State shall prepare and submit to the Secretary a
24 report containing such information as the Secretary
25 may require, that includes at a minimum, the de-

1 scripture and analysis described in paragraph (3)
2 and aggregate data concerning—

3 (A) the number of child care providers that
4 received funding under this section and licensed
5 capacity of such providers, and such data
6 disaggregated by provider type, by the quality
7 rating on the State’s tiered system for recog-
8 nizing and supporting the quality of child care
9 services described in subsection (f)(3)(B) (re-
10 ferred to in this subsection as the “quality rat-
11 ing”) of such providers, and by the geographic
12 area of such providers;

13 (B)(i) the total number of children, and
14 families with children, receiving child care serv-
15 ices funded under this section;

16 (ii) the percentage of children, and families
17 with children, receiving child care services fund-
18 ed under this section, among all children less
19 than 6 years of age, and all families with such
20 children, respectively, in all States; and

21 (iii) the data described in clause (i), and
22 the data described in clause (ii), disaggregated
23 for children, and families with children, by—

24 (I) race and ethnicity of the child in-
25 volved;

1 (II) family income of the child's fam-
2 ily;

3 (III) age of the child;

4 (IV) the child's status as an infant or
5 toddler with a disability or child with a dis-
6 ability;

7 (V) the child's status as a child expe-
8 riencing homelessness;

9 (VI) the child's status as a child in
10 foster care; and

11 (VII) the child's status (to the extent
12 the status is known) as a dual language
13 learner;

14 (C) the monthly child care subsidy pay-
15 ment rate paid to eligible child care providers
16 for child care services funded under this sec-
17 tion, as determined by the State's cost esti-
18 mation model or cost study described in sub-
19 section (f)(3)(A)(i), including any variation in
20 the rate by geographic area, provider type, age
21 of child, and costs associated with providing in-
22 clusive care;

23 (D) the amount of the copayment paid by
24 families for such child care services, and such
25 data disaggregated by family income;

1 (E) the number and percentage of pay-
2 ments made by the State for such services to el-
3 igible child care providers through certificates,
4 grants, and contracts, and such data
5 disaggregated by provider type;

6 (F) the manner in which consumer edu-
7 cation information was provided to parents and
8 the number of parents to whom such informa-
9 tion was provided under this section;

10 (G) the number of child fatalities occurring
11 among children while in the care or facility of
12 child care providers funded under this section,
13 and such data disaggregated by provider type;

14 (H) the geographic area of child care pro-
15 viders funded under this section;

16 (I) the quality features of child care serv-
17 ices provided by providers funded under this
18 section, compared to the quality features of
19 child care services provided by other child care
20 providers, to the extent possible, including data
21 on quality features such as—

22 (i) amount of staff wages and other
23 compensation (including benefits);

24 (ii) length of staff retention;

- 1 (iii) presence of coaching and profes-
- 2 sional development activities;
- 3 (iv) number of providers remaining
- 4 open through the year covered;
- 5 (v) measured parent satisfaction; and
- 6 (vi) presence of provision of informa-
- 7 tion in languages other than English;
- 8 (J) the quality features of child care serv-
- 9 ices received by children and funded under this
- 10 section, and such data disaggregated by the
- 11 children's—
- 12 (i) race and ethnicity;
- 13 (ii) family income;
- 14 (iii) age;
- 15 (iv) status as an infant or toddler
- 16 with a disability or a child with a dis-
- 17 ability;
- 18 (v) status as a child experiencing
- 19 homelessness;
- 20 (vi) status as a child in foster care;
- 21 and
- 22 (vii) status (to the extent the status is
- 23 known) as a dual language learner;

1 (K) the number of child care providers,
 2 listed by provider type, geographic area, and
 3 provider quality rating, that received—

4 (i) a startup or supply expansion
 5 grant under subsection (h)(3)(B)(i);

6 (ii) a quality grant under subsection
 7 (h)(3)(B)(ii); or

8 (iii) a facilities grant under subsection
 9 (h)(3)(B)(iii); and

10 (L) the average wages (including salaries)
 11 or other compensation for staff of eligible child
 12 care providers funded under this section, and
 13 such data disaggregated by provider type, job
 14 position type, and to the extent possible, staff
 15 race and ethnicity.

16 (3) DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS.—The State
 17 shall include in each report described in paragraph
 18 (2)—

19 (A) a description of whether there are in-
 20 equities in how child care providers with quality
 21 features described in paragraph (2)(I) are dis-
 22 tributed among children served under this sec-
 23 tion; and

24 (B) an analysis of the State’s child care
 25 supply, including an analysis of the number of

1 child care slots with licensed child care pro-
2 viders that were added or lost by the State in
3 the covered year, and trends in such addition or
4 loss by provider type and quality rating of child
5 care provider.

6 (4) RULE ON DISAGGREGATION.—Nothing in
7 this paragraph shall require disaggregation of data
8 if the disaggregation involved would reveal person-
9 ally identifiable information about an individual pro-
10 vider or child.

11 (o) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall—

12 (1) submit an annual report to the Committee
13 on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the
14 Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the
15 Committee on Education and Workforce and the
16 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
17 resentatives, summarizing the findings from the re-
18 ports received under subsection (n)(2); and

19 (2) make such report publicly available on the
20 website of the Department of Health and Human
21 Services.

22 (p) TRANSITION PROVISIONS.—

23 (1) TREATMENT OF CHILD CARE AND DEVEL-
24 OPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS.—For each of fiscal
25 years 2026 through 2031, a State receiving assist-

1 ance under this section shall not use more than 15
2 percent of any funds received under the Child Care
3 and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42
4 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.) to provide assistance for direct
5 child care services to children who are under the age
6 of 6, are not yet in kindergarten, and are eligible
7 under that Act.

8 (2) SPECIAL RULES REGARDING ELIGIBILITY.—
9 Any child who is less than 6 years of age, is not yet
10 in kindergarten, and is receiving assistance under
11 the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of
12 1990 on the date funding is first allocated to the
13 lead agency for the State, territory, Indian Tribe, or
14 Tribal organization involved under this section—

15 (A) shall be deemed immediately eligible to
16 receive assistance under this section; and

17 (B) may continue to use the child care pro-
18 vider of the family's choice.

19 (3) TRANSITION PROCEDURES.—The Secretary
20 is authorized to institute procedures for imple-
21 menting this section, including issuing guidance for
22 States receiving funds under subsection (g).

1 **TITLE II—BUILDING AN AFFORD-**
2 **ABLE SYSTEM FOR EARLY**
3 **EDUCATION GRANTS**

4 **SEC. 201. PURPOSES.**

5 The purposes of this title are to make child care serv-
6 ices more accessible for families and to support the sta-
7 bility and quality of eligible child care providers by—

8 (1) promoting the stability of the child care sec-
9 tor by providing a source of stable funding to eligible
10 child care providers to help offset their operating ex-
11 penses;

12 (2) supporting sustained and increased wages
13 for early childhood educators or other staff of eligi-
14 ble child care providers, in order to stabilize and
15 grow the child care workforce;

16 (3) expanding the supply and capacity of eligi-
17 ble child care providers to ensure working families
18 have a range of high-quality, affordable child care
19 options, in a variety of settings, that meet their
20 unique needs; and

21 (4) supporting access to child care services for
22 communities facing a particular shortage of child
23 care options, including child care services for infants
24 and toddlers, child care services during nontradi-

1 tional or extended hours, and inclusive child care
2 services for children with disabilities.

3 **SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this title:

5 (1) CCDBG TERMS.—The terms “child care
6 certificate”, “child with a disability”, “family child
7 care provider”, “lead agency”, “Secretary”, and
8 “State” have the meanings given the terms in sec-
9 tion 658P of the Child Care and Development Block
10 Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n). The terms
11 “Indian Tribe” and “Tribal organization” have the
12 meanings given the terms “Indian tribe” and “tribal
13 organization” in section 658P of that Act.

14 (2) ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER.—The
15 term “eligible child care provider” means—

16 (A) an eligible child care provider as de-
17 fined in section 658P of the Child Care and De-
18 velopment Block Grant Act of 1990; and

19 (B) an eligible child care provider as de-
20 fined in title I.

21 (3) INFANT OR TODDLER.—The term “infant
22 or toddler” means an individual who is less than 3
23 years of age.

24 (4) INFANT OR TODDLER WITH A DIS-
25 ABILITY.—The term “infant or toddler with a dis-

1 ability” has the meaning given the term in section
2 101(b).

3 (5) PROVIDER TYPE.—The term “provider
4 type” means a type that is—

5 (A) a center-based child care provider;

6 (B) a family child care provider; or

7 (C) another non-center-based child care
8 provider.

9 **SEC. 203. SECRETARIAL RESERVATION.**

10 From the funds appropriated to carry out this title,
11 the Secretary shall reserve not more than 3 percent for
12 the Federal administration of grants described in section
13 204, which may include providing technical assistance to
14 the lead agencies.

15 **SEC. 204. GRANTS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—From the amounts appropriated
17 to carry out this title that remain after the Secretary
18 makes the reservation required under section 203, and
19 under the authority of section 658O of the Child Care and
20 Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858m)
21 and this section, the Secretary shall award to each lead
22 agency a BASE Grant, without regard to the requirements
23 in subparagraphs (C) and (E) of section 658E(c)(3), and
24 in section 658G, of that Act (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)(3),
25 9858e). Such grant shall be made from an amount allotted

1 in accordance with section 658O of that Act (42 U.S.C.
2 9858m), excluding paragraphs (3) through (5) of sub-
3 section (a) of that section.

4 (b) PAYMENTS FOR INDIAN CHILDREN.—In accord-
5 ance with section 658O of that Act, the Secretary may
6 make BASE Grants to Indian Tribes or Tribal organiza-
7 tions for the planning and carrying out of programs or
8 activities consistent with the objectives of this title.

9 **SEC. 205. STATE APPLICATION.**

10 To be eligible to receive a grant under section 204,
11 a lead agency shall submit an application to the Secretary
12 at such time, in such manner, and including such informa-
13 tion as the Secretary may reasonably require, including—

14 (1) a description of the process the lead agency
15 will establish to award subgrant funds to eligible
16 child care providers under this title;

17 (2) a description of how the lead agency will, in
18 determining the subgrant amount for an eligible
19 child care provider under this title—

20 (A) ensure such subgrant is sufficient to
21 support the ongoing operations and long-term
22 sustainability of the eligible child care provider;

23 (B) account for the cost of providing high-
24 quality child care services, including—

1 (i) variations in the cost of child care
2 services related to geographic area, pro-
3 vider type, size of provider, and age of
4 child served;

5 (ii) costs associated with providing
6 care during nontraditional or extended
7 hours;

8 (iii) costs associated with serving chil-
9 dren with disabilities, including infants and
10 toddlers with disabilities; and

11 (iv) costs associated with meeting
12 group sizes and ratios necessary to support
13 high-quality and inclusive child care serv-
14 ices, including for infants and toddlers;

15 (C) account for the cost of attracting,
16 training, and retaining a qualified and skilled
17 workforce, which shall include at a minimum,
18 supporting increased wages for all staff of the
19 provider, as described in section 209(5); and

20 (D) if the lead agency uses a formula for
21 awarding such a subgrant that is based on gen-
22 eral cost estimates, base such estimates on the
23 provider's enrollment capacity rather than at-
24 tendance;

1 (3) a description of how the lead agency will
2 work with the eligible child care providers to improve
3 the quality of child care services, which may include
4 improving the State’s tiered system for recognizing
5 and supporting the quality of child care services de-
6 scribed in section 101(f)(3)(B); and

7 (4) a description of how the lead agency will
8 use funds reserved under section 207(a)(1) to con-
9 duct widespread outreach and provide technical as-
10 sistance to eligible child care providers (including
11 family child care providers, providers with limited
12 administrative capacity, and providers whose pri-
13 mary language is not English), either directly or
14 through child care resource and referral organiza-
15 tions, staffed family child care networks, or local
16 governments, to ensure such providers are aware of
17 the subgrants available under this title and are able
18 to apply for and manage the resources provided
19 through such subgrants.

20 **SEC. 206. ADMINISTRATION.**

21 Activities funded under a grant made for a State
22 under section 204 may be administered—

- 23 (1) directly by the State’s lead agency; or
24 (2) under a grant or contract to provide such
25 administration, through another State government

1 agency, a local or regional child care resource and
2 referral organization, a community development fi-
3 nancial institution, another nonprofit intermediary
4 with experience supporting child care providers, or
5 another appropriate entity.

6 **SEC. 207. STATE ACTIVITIES AND SUBGRANTS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—A lead agency for a State that
8 receives a BASE Grant pursuant to section 204 shall—

9 (1) reserve not more than 10 percent of the
10 grant funds to administer subgrants, provide tech-
11 nical assistance and support to enable all provider
12 types to apply for, access, and manage the resources
13 provided through such subgrants and other sources
14 of public financial assistance available for the objec-
15 tives of this title, publicize the availability of the
16 subgrants, and carry out activities to increase the
17 supply of child care services, under this title; and

18 (2) with the remaining grant funds, make sub-
19 grants to eligible child care providers to carry out
20 the activities described in section 210.

21 (b) SUBGRANT PERIOD.—The lead agency shall make
22 the subgrants for a period of 5 years.

23 (c) PAYMENT PRACTICES.—The lead agency shall
24 make the subgrant payments in advance, with necessary

1 adjustments on account of overpayments or underpay-
2 ments.

3 **SEC. 208. PRIORITY FOR SUBGRANTS.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—In making subgrants under this
5 title, the lead agency shall give priority to eligible child
6 care providers that—

7 (1) provide child care services during nontradi-
8 tional or extended hours;

9 (2) provide child care services to infants and
10 toddlers;

11 (3) provide child care services to dual language
12 learners, children with disabilities, children experi-
13 encing homelessness, children in foster care, or chil-
14 dren from low-income families;

15 (4) provide child care services to children whose
16 families received subsidies under the Child Care and
17 Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
18 9857 et seq.) or under title I, as applicable, for the
19 child care services;

20 (5) operate in communities, including commu-
21 nities with a high proportion of children in house-
22 holds with incomes below the poverty line and rural
23 communities, with a low supply of child care serv-
24 ices; or

1 (6) are small business concerns, as defined in
2 section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
3 632), or nonprofit organizations that are described
4 in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of
5 1986 and exempt from taxation under section
6 501(a) of such Code.

7 (b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “poverty
8 line” means the poverty line defined and revised as de-
9 scribed in section 673 of the Community Services Block
10 Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902).

11 **SEC. 209. ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER APPLICATION.**

12 To be qualified to receive a subgrant under this title,
13 an eligible child care provider shall submit to the cor-
14 responding lead agency, at such time and in such manner
15 as the lead agency may reasonably require, an application
16 containing each of the following:

17 (1) A description of how the eligible child care
18 provider meets the priority requirements in section
19 208, if applicable.

20 (2) An assurance that the eligible child care
21 provider accepts child care subsidies in the form of
22 certificates, grants, or contracts as authorized under
23 the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of
24 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.), or child care sub-
25 sidies in the form of certificates, grants, or contracts

1 under title I, as an acceptable form of payment, re-
2 gardless of whether children who are the bene-
3 ficiaries of the child care subsidies are actually en-
4 rolled.

5 (3) An assurance that the eligible child care
6 provider, for the duration of the period of the grant
7 under section 204, will be open and available to
8 serve children unless temporarily closed due to or for
9 a building safety issue or maintenance as a result of
10 a building safety issue, widespread illness or a staff
11 shortage, a routine closure or break due to a holiday
12 or scheduled staff professional development session,
13 or a state of emergency, major disaster, or emer-
14 gency within the meaning of section 658E(c)(2)(U)
15 of the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of
16 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858e(c)(2)(U)).

17 (4) A description of how the eligible child care
18 provider will use funds provided under the subgrant
19 to improve the quality of child care services and op-
20 erations, such as through participation in a State's
21 tiered system for recognizing and supporting the
22 quality of child care services.

23 (5) A description of how the eligible child care
24 provider will pay staff increased compensation over

1 the course of the grant period including, at a min-
2 imum, providing—

3 (A) annual cost-of-living adjustments; and

4 (B) graduated pay increases based on a
5 staff member's credentials, experience, and job
6 responsibilities, including, for a provider with
7 15 or more staff, a wage ladder based on the
8 credentials, experience, and responsibilities.

9 **SEC. 210. USE OF FUNDS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—An eligible child care provider
11 that receives a subgrant under this title—

12 (1) shall use at least 70 percent of subgrant
13 funds for child care personnel costs, including—

14 (A) wages (including salaries), or similar
15 compensation for a person who is a staff mem-
16 ber or any sole proprietor or independent con-
17 tractor, aligned with wage standards; and

18 (B)(i) annual cost-of-living adjustments for
19 staff; and

20 (ii) graduated pay increases based on a
21 staff member's credentials, experience, and job
22 responsibilities, including, for a provider with
23 15 or more staff, a wage ladder based on the
24 credentials, experience, and responsibilities; and

1 (2) may use the subgrant funds for costs of ac-
2 tivities related to the provider's program, consisting
3 of—

4 (A) professional development and instruc-
5 tional coaching for staff involved in the direct
6 education and care of children, and providing
7 support for planning and instruction;

8 (B) providing recruitment and retention
9 bonuses for staff;

10 (C) providing staff benefits, such as health
11 insurance, paid leave (including parental, fam-
12 ily, medical, sick, and bereavement leave, and
13 including personal leave or vacation), and funds
14 for retirement accounts;

15 (D) hiring staff, including conducting
16 background checks, and including hiring staff
17 to reduce staff-to-child ratios or substitute staff
18 to support use of paid leave;

19 (E) paying for occupancy, including mak-
20 ing payments for—

21 (i) rent (including rent under a lease),
22 or on any mortgage obligation; and

23 (ii) insurance, utilities, and mainte-
24 nance;

1 (F) obtaining equipment, repairs, supplies,
2 services, and training necessary to ensure com-
3 pliance with applicable health, safety, edu-
4 cational, and quality requirements and to sup-
5 port high-quality, developmentally appropriate
6 child care services, and achieving licensure as a
7 child care provider;

8 (G) providing comprehensive services to
9 support the health, including mental health,
10 and well-being, of children and families from
11 underserved populations, as described in section
12 101(f)(3)(I);

13 (H) improving the quality of child care
14 services in a way that is appropriate for child
15 development by provider type involved, and for
16 the age group of the children served; and

17 (I) providing inclusive and developmentally
18 appropriate care for children with disabilities,
19 including implementing reasonable accommoda-
20 tions, making space more accessible, and pro-
21 viding additional staffing and coordinating early
22 intervention services provided through the pro-
23 vider's program with early intervention services
24 provided through other early childhood pro-
25 grams.

1 (b) SPECIAL RULE FOR STATES PARTICIPATING IN
 2 TITLE I PROGRAM.—Notwithstanding subsection (a) and
 3 subject to the approval of the Secretary, a lead agency
 4 of a State participating in the program established in title
 5 I may make alternative uses of the funds received through
 6 a grant made under section 204, if such funds support—

7 (1) the provision of high-quality, affordable
 8 child care services, in accordance with title I;

9 (2) compensation for early childhood educators
 10 and staff of child care programs, of eligible child
 11 care providers, that meet the requirements of title I;
 12 or

13 (3) initiatives to expand the supply of eligible
 14 child care providers or improve the quality of child
 15 care services provided by eligible child care pro-
 16 viders.

17 (c) RULE.—For purposes of subsection (a), the terms
 18 “staff” and “staff member” include a person described in
 19 subsection (a)(1)(A).

20 **SEC. 211. REPORTING.**

21 (a) LEAD AGENCY REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year
 22 after a lead agency has received a grant under section 204
 23 and annually thereafter, the lead agency shall submit to
 24 the Secretary, in such manner and containing such infor-

1 mation as the Secretary may require, a report that in-
2 cludes, at a minimum—

3 (1) the total number of eligible child care pro-
4 viders who applied for a subgrant under this title
5 relative to the total number of eligible child care pro-
6 viders in the State, disaggregated by provider type,
7 race and ethnicity of provider, and geographic area;

8 (2) the total number of eligible child care pro-
9 viders that received such a subgrant (referred to in
10 this section as a “subgrant recipient”) relative to the
11 total number of eligible child care providers in the
12 State, disaggregated by provider type, race and eth-
13 nicity of provider, and geographic area;

14 (3) information stating the lead agency’s meth-
15 odology for determining the amounts of subgrants
16 under section 207(a)(2);

17 (4) the average and range of the subgrant
18 amounts made available by the lead agency,
19 disaggregated by provider type, race and ethnicity of
20 provider, and geographic area;

21 (5) the percentages, of the subgrant recipients,
22 that—

23 (A) provided child care services during
24 nontraditional or extended hours;

1 (B) served dual language learners, children
2 with disabilities, children experiencing homeless-
3 ness, children in foster care, children from low-
4 income families, or infants and toddlers;

5 (C) served children whose families received
6 subsidies under the Child Care and Develop-
7 ment Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9857
8 et seq.) or under title I, as applicable, for the
9 child care services;

10 (D) operated in communities described in
11 section 208(a)(5); and

12 (E) are concerns or organizations de-
13 scribed in section 208(a)(6);

14 (6) the enrollment capacity of and average
15 monthly attendance of children (by age) served by
16 the subgrant recipients;

17 (7) the average family tuition for a subgrant re-
18 cipient, disaggregated by—

19 (A) age of the child served; and

20 (B) provider type;

21 (8) the average wages (including salaries), or
22 similar compensation specified in section
23 210(a)(1)(A) of staff of a subgrant recipient,
24 disaggregated by provider type;

1 (9) the percentages of subgrant recipients, for
2 each of the provider types;

3 (10) the percentage of subgrant recipients that
4 have staff members that are represented by labor or-
5 ganizations;

6 (11) information about how the subgrant recipi-
7 ents used the funds received under such a subgrant,
8 including how funds were used for child care per-
9 sonnel costs;

10 (12) information about how the lead agency
11 used funds reserved under section 207(a)(1);

12 (13) a description of how the lead agency pub-
13 licized the availability of the subgrants, including
14 through making applications and materials available
15 in multiple languages, and provided technical assist-
16 ance and support to ensure all provider types were
17 able to apply for and access the subgrants; and

18 (14)(A) information about subgrant recipients
19 that have corporate or other business relationships
20 across multiple locations and serve more than 5,000
21 children in the year covered by the report; and

22 (B) the percentage of all children served by
23 subgrant recipients that are subgrant recipients de-
24 scribed in subparagraph (A).

25 (b) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary shall—

1 (1) submit an annual report to the Committee
2 on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the
3 Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the
4 Committee on Education and Workforce and the
5 Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
6 resentatives, summarizing the findings from the re-
7 ports received under subsection (a); and

8 (2) make such report publicly available on the
9 website of the Department of Health and Human
10 Services.

11 **SEC. 212. SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.**

12 Amounts made available to carry out this title shall
13 be used to supplement and not supplant other Federal,
14 State, and local public funds expended to provide child
15 care services for eligible individuals.

16 **SEC. 213. APPROPRIATIONS.**

17 In addition to amounts otherwise available, there is
18 appropriated to the Department of Health and Human
19 Services, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise
20 appropriated to carry out this title, \$9,000,000,000 for
21 each of fiscal years 2026 through 2031.

22 **TITLE III—UNIVERSAL**
23 **PRESCHOOL**

24 **SEC. 301. DEFINITIONS.**

25 In this section:

1 (1) CHILD EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.—

2 The term “child experiencing homelessness” means
3 an individual who is a homeless child or youth under
4 section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assist-
5 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a).

6 (2) CHILD WITH A DISABILITY.—The term
7 “child with a disability” has the meaning given the
8 term in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabil-
9 ities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401).

10 (3) COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES.—The term
11 “comprehensive services” means services that are
12 provided to children and their families, and that are
13 health, educational, nutritional, social, and other
14 services that are determined, based on family needs
15 assessments, to be necessary, within the meaning of
16 section 636 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831).

17 (4) DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNER.—The term
18 “dual language learner” means a child who is learn-
19 ing 2 or more languages at the same time, or a child
20 who is learning a second language while continuing
21 to develop the child’s first language.

22 (5) ELIGIBLE CHILD.—The term “eligible
23 child” means a child who is age 3 or 4, on the date
24 established by the applicable local educational agen-
25 cy for kindergarten entry.

1 (6) ELIGIBLE PROVIDER.—The term “eligible
2 provider” means—

3 (A) a local educational agency, acting
4 alone or in a consortium or in collaboration
5 with an educational service agency (as defined
6 in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
7 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
8 7801)), that is licensed by the State or meets
9 comparable health and safety standards;

10 (B) a Head Start agency or delegate agen-
11 cy funded under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C.
12 9831 et seq.);

13 (C) a licensed center-based child care pro-
14 vider, licensed family child care provider, or
15 network of licensed family child care providers;
16 or

17 (D) a consortium of entities described in
18 any of subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C).

19 (7) HEAD START AGENCY.—The term “Head
20 Start agency”, as used in paragraph (6)(B), or sec-
21 tion 303(e)(4) or 306(a), means an entity designated
22 as a Head Start agency under section 641(a)(1) of
23 the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9836(a)(1)) or as an
24 Early Head Start agency (by receiving a grant)

1 under section 645A(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C.
2 9840a(a)).

3 (8) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
4 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
5 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
6 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

7 (9) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term
8 “local educational agency” has the meaning given
9 the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
10 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

11 (10) POVERTY LINE.—The term “poverty line”
12 means the poverty line defined and revised as de-
13 scribed in section 673 of the Community Services
14 Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902).

15 (11) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary”
16 means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

17 (12) STATE.—The term “State” means each of
18 the several States and the District of Columbia.

19 (13) TERRITORY.—The term “territory” means
20 each of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the
21 United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American
22 Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern
23 Mariana Islands.

24 (14) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Trib-
25 al organization” has the meaning given the term

1 “tribal organization” in section 658P of the Child
2 Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42
3 U.S.C. 9858n).

4 **SEC. 302. UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL.**

5 (a) APPROPRIATIONS FOR STATES.—In addition to
6 amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the
7 Department of Health and Human Services, out of any
8 money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, such
9 sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2026
10 through 2031, for payments to States, for carrying out
11 this title (except provisions and activities covered by sub-
12 section (b)).

13 (b) ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to
14 amounts otherwise available, there is appropriated to the
15 Department of Health and Human Services for fiscal year
16 2026, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise ap-
17 propriated—

18 (1) \$2,500,000,000, to remain available until
19 September 30, 2031, for carrying out payments to
20 Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations for activities
21 described in this title;

22 (2) \$1,250,000,000, to remain available until
23 September 30, 2031, for carrying out payments to
24 the territories, to be distributed among the terri-
25 tories on the basis of their relative need, as deter-

1 mined by the Secretary in accordance with the objec-
 2 tives of this title, for activities described in this title;

3 (3) \$300,000,000, to remain available until
 4 September 30, 2031, for carrying out payments to
 5 eligible local entities that serve children in families
 6 who are engaged in migrant or seasonal agricultural
 7 labor, for activities described in this title;

8 (4) \$995,000,000, to remain available until
 9 September 30, 2031, for carrying out Federal activi-
 10 ties to support the activities funded under this title,
 11 including administration, monitoring, technical as-
 12 sistance, and research, in fiscal years 2026 through
 13 2031; and

14 (5) \$20,000,000,000, to remain available until
 15 September 30, 2031, to carry out the program of
 16 grants to localities described in subsections (b) and
 17 (c) of section 306.

18 **SEC. 303. PAYMENTS FOR STATE UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL**
 19 **SERVICES.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—A State that has submitted, and
 21 had approved by the Secretary in collaboration with the
 22 Secretary of Education, the State plan described in sub-
 23 section (e) is entitled to a payment under this section.

24 (b) PAYMENTS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2026 THROUGH
 25 2031.—

1 (1) PRESCHOOL SERVICES.—For each of fiscal
2 years 2026 through 2031, the Secretary shall pay to
3 each State with an approved State plan under sub-
4 section (e), an amount for that year equal to—

5 (A) 90 percent of the State’s expenditures
6 in the year for preschool services provided
7 under section 304, for fiscal year 2026;

8 (B) 90 percent of the State’s expenditures
9 in the year for such preschool services, for fiscal
10 year 2027;

11 (C) 80 percent of the State’s expenditures
12 in the year for such preschool services, for fiscal
13 year 2028;

14 (D) 75 percent of the State’s expenditures
15 in the year for such preschool services, for fiscal
16 year 2029;

17 (E) 65 percent of the State’s expenditures
18 in the year for such preschool services, for fiscal
19 year 2030; and

20 (F) 60 percent of the State’s expenditures
21 in the year for such preschool services, for fiscal
22 year 2031.

23 (2) STATE ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall
24 pay to each State with an approved State plan under
25 subsection (e) an amount for a fiscal year equal to

1 50 percent of the amount of the State's expenditures
2 for the activities described in subsection (c), and sys-
3 tem-wide activities similar to those described in sub-
4 section (c) for the State's entire birth through 5
5 year old early childhood system, except that in no
6 case shall a payment for a fiscal year under this
7 paragraph exceed the amount equal to 10 percent of
8 the State's expenditures described in paragraph (1)
9 for such fiscal year.

10 (3) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The remainder of
11 the cost paid by the State for preschool services,
12 that is not provided under paragraph (1), shall be
13 considered the non-Federal share of the cost of those
14 services. The remainder of the cost paid by the State
15 for State activities, that is not provided under para-
16 graph (2), shall be considered the non-Federal share
17 of the cost of those activities.

18 (4) ADVANCE PAYMENT; RETROSPECTIVE AD-
19 JUSTMENT.—The Secretary shall make a payment
20 under paragraph (1) or (2) for a year on the basis
21 of advance estimates of expenditures submitted by
22 the State and such other investigation as the Sec-
23 retary may find necessary, and shall reduce or in-
24 crease the payment as necessary to adjust for any
25 overpayment or underpayment for a previous year.

1 (c) STATE ACTIVITIES.—A State that receives a pay-
2 ment under subsection (b) shall carry out all of the fol-
3 lowing activities:

4 (1) State administration of the State preschool
5 program described in this section.

6 (2) Supporting a continuous quality improve-
7 ment system for providers of preschool services par-
8 ticipating, or seeking to participate, in the State pre-
9 school program, through the use of data, research,
10 monitoring, training, technical assistance, profes-
11 sional development, and coaching.

12 (3) Providing outreach and enrollment support
13 for families of eligible children.

14 (4) Supporting data systems building to ensure
15 that the State has the capacity to manage and im-
16 plement data systems that allow data sharing among
17 and between preschools, elementary schools, and sec-
18 ondary schools.

19 (5) Supporting staff of eligible providers
20 through professional development and coaching, and
21 supporting staff in pursuing credentials and degrees,
22 including baccalaureate degrees.

23 (6) Supporting activities that ensure access to
24 inclusive preschool programs for children with dis-
25 abilities.

1 (7) Providing age-appropriate transportation
2 services for children, which at a minimum shall in-
3 clude transportation services for children experi-
4 encing homelessness and children in foster care.

5 (8) Conducting or updating a statewide needs
6 assessment of access to high-quality preschool serv-
7 ices.

8 (d) LEAD AGENCY.—The Governor of a State desir-
9 ing for the State to receive a payment under this section
10 shall designate a lead agency (such as a State agency or
11 joint interagency office) for the administration of the
12 State’s preschool program under this section.

13 (e) STATE PLAN.—In order to be eligible for pay-
14 ments under this section, the Governor of a State shall
15 submit a State plan to the Secretary for approval by the
16 Secretary, in collaboration with the Secretary of Edu-
17 cation, at such time, in such manner, and containing such
18 information as the Secretary shall by rule require, that
19 includes a plan for achieving universal, high-quality, free,
20 inclusive, and mixed-delivery preschool services. Such plan
21 shall include, at a minimum, each of the following:

22 (1) A certification that—

23 (A) the State has in place, or will have in
24 place no later than 1 year after the State first
25 receives funding under this section, develop-

1 mentally appropriate, evidence-based preschool
2 education standards that, at a minimum, are as
3 rigorous as the standards specified in subpara-
4 graph (B) of section 641A(a)(1) of the Head
5 Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9836a(a)(1)) and include
6 program standards for class sizes and ratios;
7 and

8 (B) the State will coordinate such stand-
9 ards with other early learning standards in the
10 State.

11 (2) An assurance that the State will ensure—

12 (A) all preschool services in the State
13 funded under this section will— (i) be univer-
14 sally available to all children in the State with-
15 out any additional eligibility requirements; and

16 (ii) be high-quality, free, and inclu-
17 sive; and

18 (B) that the local preschool programs in
19 the State funded under this section will—

20 (i) by not later than 18 months after
21 the program receives such funding, meet
22 the State’s preschool education standards
23 described in paragraph (1);

1 (ii) offer programming that meets the
2 duration requirements of at least 1,020 an-
3 nual hours;

4 (iii) adopt policies and practices to
5 conduct outreach and provide expedited en-
6 rollment, including prioritization, to—

7 (I) children experiencing home-
8 lessness (which, in the case of a child
9 attending a program provided by an
10 eligible provider described in section
11 301(6)(A), shall include immediate
12 enrollment for the child);

13 (II) children in foster care or
14 kinship care;

15 (III) children in families who are
16 engaged in migrant or seasonal agri-
17 cultural labor;

18 (IV) children with disabilities, in-
19 cluding eligible children who are
20 served under part C of the Individuals
21 with Disabilities Education Act (20
22 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.); and

23 (V) dual language learners;

24 (iv) provide for salaries, and set
25 schedules for salaries, for staff of providers

1 in the State preschool program, including
2 staff serving infants and toddlers employed
3 by the same provider, that are equivalent
4 to salaries of elementary school staff with
5 similar credentials and experience;

6 (v) at a minimum, provide a living
7 wage for all staff of such providers; and

8 (vi) require educational qualifications
9 for teachers in the preschool program in-
10 cluding, at a minimum, requiring that lead
11 teachers in the preschool program have a
12 baccalaureate degree in early childhood
13 education or a related field by not later
14 than 6 years after the date on which the
15 State first receives funds under this sec-
16 tion, except that—

17 (I) subject to subclause (II), the
18 requirements under this clause shall
19 not apply to individuals who were em-
20 ployed by an eligible provider or early
21 education program for a cumulative 3
22 of the 5 years immediately preceding
23 the date of enactment of this Act and
24 have the necessary content knowledge
25 and teaching skills for early childhood

1 educators, as demonstrated through
2 measures determined by the State;
3 and

4 (II) nothing in this section shall
5 require the State to lessen State re-
6 quirements for educational qualifica-
7 tions, in existence on the date of en-
8 actment of this Act, to serve as a
9 teacher in a State preschool program.

10 (3) For States with existing publicly funded
11 State preschool programs (as of the date of submis-
12 sion of the State plan), a description of how the
13 State plans to use funding provided under this sec-
14 tion to ensure that such existing programs in the
15 State meet the requirements of this title for a State
16 preschool program.

17 (4) A description of how the State, in estab-
18 lishing and operating the State preschool program
19 supported under this section, will—

20 (A) support a mixed-delivery system for
21 any new slots funded under this section, includ-
22 ing by facilitating the participation of Head
23 Start programs and programs offered by li-
24 censed child care providers;

1 (B) ensure the State preschool program
2 does not disrupt the stability of infant and tod-
3 dler child care throughout the State;

4 (C) ensure adequate consultation with the
5 State Advisory Council on Early Childhood
6 Education and Care designated or established
7 in section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start
8 Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)) in the devel-
9 opment of its plan, including consultation in
10 how the State intends to distribute slots under
11 subparagraph (E);

12 (D) partner with Head Start agencies to
13 ensure the full utilization of Head Start pro-
14 grams within the State; and

15 (E) distribute new preschool slots and re-
16 sources equitably among child care (including
17 family child care) providers, Head Start agen-
18 cies, and schools within the State.

19 (5) A certification that the State, in operating
20 the program described in this section for a fiscal
21 year—

22 (A) will not reduce the total preschool slots
23 provided in State-funded preschool programs
24 from the number of such slots in the previous
25 fiscal year; or

1 (B) if the number of eligible children iden-
2 tified in the State declines from the previous
3 fiscal year, will maintain at least the previous
4 year's ratio of the total preschool slots de-
5 scribed in subparagraph (A) to eligible children
6 so identified.

7 (6) An assurance that the State will use fund-
8 ing provided under this section to ensure children
9 with disabilities have access to and participate in in-
10 clusive preschool programs consistent with provisions
11 in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
12 (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), and a description of how
13 the State will collaborate with entities carrying out
14 programs under section 619 or part C of the Indi-
15 viduals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.
16 1419, 1431 et seq.), to support inclusive preschool
17 programs.

18 (7) An assurance that the State will provide as-
19 sistance under this section only to eligible providers
20 that prohibit the use of suspension, expulsion, and
21 aversive behavioral interventions in the State pre-
22 school program described in this section.

23 (8) An assurance that the State will coordinate
24 services provided under this title with services and
25 supports provided under the Child Care and Devel-

1 opment Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9857
2 et seq.), section 619 and part C of the Individuals
3 with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419,
4 1431 et seq.), the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831
5 et seq.), the Preschool Development Grants program
6 under section 9212 of the Every Student Succeeds
7 Act (Public Law 114–95), the Elementary and Sec-
8 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et
9 seq.), the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
10 (42 U.S.C. 11301 et seq.), and the maternal, infant,
11 and early childhood home visiting programs under
12 section 511 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
13 711).

14 (9) A certification that the State will support
15 the continuous quality improvement of programs
16 providing preschool services under this title, includ-
17 ing support through technical assistance, moni-
18 toring, and research.

19 (10) A certification that the State will ensure a
20 highly qualified early childhood workforce to support
21 the requirements of this title.

22 (11) An assurance that the State will meet the
23 requirements of clauses (ii) and (iii) of section
24 658E(c)(2)(T) of the Child Care and Development
25 Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.

1 9858c(e)(2)(T)), with respect to funding and assess-
 2 ments under this title.

3 (12) A certification that subgrant and contract
 4 amounts provided as described in section 304 will be
 5 sufficient to enable eligible providers to meet the re-
 6 quirements of this title, and will provide for in-
 7 creased payment amounts based on the criteria de-
 8 scribed in clauses (iv) and (v) of paragraph (2)(B).

9 (13) An agreement to provide to the Secretary
 10 such periodic reports, providing a detailed account-
 11 ing of the uses of funding received under this sec-
 12 tion, as the Secretary may require for the adminis-
 13 tration of this section.

14 (f) DURATION OF THE PLAN.—Each State plan shall
 15 remain in effect for a period of not more than 3 years.
 16 Amendments to the State plan shall remain in effect for
 17 the duration of the plan.

18 **SEC. 304. SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS FOR LOCAL PRE-**
 19 **SCHOOL PROGRAMS.**

20 (a) SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives a pay-
 22 ment under section 303(b) for a fiscal year shall use
 23 amounts provided through the payment to pay the
 24 costs of subgrants to, or contracts with, eligible pro-
 25 viders to operate universal, high-quality, free, and

1 inclusive preschool programs (which State-funded
2 programs may be referred to in this section as “local
3 preschool programs”) through the State preschool
4 program in accordance with subsection (c). A State
5 shall reduce or increase the amounts provided under
6 such subgrants or contracts if needed to adjust for
7 any overpayment or underpayment described in sec-
8 tion 303(b)(4).

9 (2) AMOUNT.—A State shall award a subgrant
10 or contract under this section in a sufficient amount
11 to enable the eligible provider to operate a local pre-
12 school program that meets the requirements of sec-
13 tion 303(e)(2), which amount shall reflect variations
14 in the cost of preschool services by geographic area,
15 type of provider, and age of child, and the additional
16 costs associated with providing inclusive preschool
17 services for children with disabilities.

18 (3) DURATION.—The State shall award a
19 subgrant or contract under this section for a period
20 of not less than 3 years, unless the subgrant or con-
21 tract is terminated or suspended, or the subgrant
22 period is reduced, for cause.

23 (b) ENHANCED PAYMENTS FOR COMPREHENSIVE
24 SERVICES.—In awarding subgrants or contracts under
25 this subsection and in addition to meeting the require-

1 ments of subsection (a)(2), the State shall award sub-
 2 grants or contracts with enhanced payments to eligible
 3 providers that offer local preschool programs funded under
 4 this section to a high percentage of low-income children
 5 to support comprehensive services.

6 (c) ESTABLISHING AND EXPANDING UNIVERSAL
 7 PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS.—

8 (1) ESTABLISHING AND EXPANDING UNIVERSAL
 9 PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS IN HIGH-NEED COMMU-
 10 NITIES.—In awarding subgrants or contracts under
 11 this section, the State shall first prioritize estab-
 12 lishing and expanding universal local preschool pro-
 13 grams within and across high-need communities by
 14 awarding subgrants or contracts to eligible providers
 15 operating within and across, or with capacity to op-
 16 erate within and across, such high-need commu-
 17 nities. The State shall—

18 (A) use a research-based methodology ap-
 19 proved by the Secretary to identify such high-
 20 need communities, as determined by—

21 (i) the rate of poverty in the commu-
 22 nity;

23 (ii) rates of access to high-quality pre-
 24 school within the community; and

1 (iii) other indicators of community
2 need as required by the Secretary; and

3 (B) distribute funding for preschool serv-
4 ices under this section within such a high-need
5 community so that a majority of children in the
6 community are offered such preschool services
7 before the State establishes and expands pre-
8 school services in communities with lower levels
9 of need.

10 (2) USE OF FUNDS.—Subgrants or contracts
11 awarded under paragraph (1) shall be used to enroll
12 and serve children in such a local preschool program
13 involved, including by paying the costs—

14 (A) of personnel (including classroom and
15 administrative personnel), including compensa-
16 tion (including benefits);

17 (B) associated with implementing the
18 State’s preschool standards, providing cur-
19 riculum supports, and meeting early learning
20 and development standards;

21 (C) of professional development, teacher
22 supports, and training;

23 (D) of implementing and meeting develop-
24 mentally appropriate health and safety stand-
25 ards (including licensure, where applicable),

1 teacher to child ratios, and group size maxi-
2 mums;

3 (E) of materials, equipment, and supplies;
4 and

5 (F) of rent or a mortgage, utilities, build-
6 ing security, indoor and outdoor maintenance,
7 and insurance.

8 (d) ESTABLISHING AND EXPANDING UNIVERSAL
9 PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS IN ADDITIONAL COMMUNITIES.—
10 Once a State that receives a payment under section 303(b)
11 meets the requirements of subsection (c) with respect to
12 establishing and expanding local preschool programs with-
13 in and across high-need communities, the State shall use
14 funds from such payment to enroll and serve children in
15 local preschool programs, as described in such subsection,
16 in additional communities in accordance with the metrics
17 described in subsection (c)(1)(A). Such funds shall be used
18 for the activities described in subparagraphs (A) through
19 (F) of subsection (c)(2).

20 **SEC. 305. PAYMENTS FOR UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL SERV-**
21 **ICES TO INDIAN TRIBES AND TERRITORIES.**

22 (a) INDIAN TRIBES AND TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—
23 (1) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years
24 2026 through 2031, from the amount appropriated
25 for Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations under

1 section 302(b)(1), the Secretary shall make pay-
2 ments to Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations
3 with an application approved under paragraph (2),
4 and the Tribes and Tribal organizations shall be en-
5 titled to such payments for the purpose of carrying
6 out the preschool program described in this title,
7 consistent, to the extent practicable as determined
8 by the Secretary, with the requirements applicable to
9 States.

10 (2) APPLICATIONS.—An Indian Tribe or Tribal
11 organization seeking a payment under this sub-
12 section shall submit an application to the Secretary
13 at such time, in such manner, and containing such
14 information as the Secretary may specify.

15 (b) TERRITORIES.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years
17 2026 through 2031, from the amount appropriated
18 for territories under section 302(b)(2), the Secretary
19 shall make payments to the territories with an appli-
20 cation approved under paragraph (2), and the terri-
21 tories shall be entitled to such payments, for the
22 purpose of carrying out the preschool program de-
23 scribed in this title, consistent, to the extent prac-
24 ticable as determined by the Secretary, with the re-
25 quirements applicable to States.

1 (2) APPLICATIONS.—A territory seeking a pay-
2 ment under this subsection shall submit an applica-
3 tion to the Secretary at such time, in such manner,
4 and containing such information as the Secretary
5 may specify.

6 (c) LEAD AGENCY.—The head of an Indian Tribe or
7 territory desiring for the Indian Tribe or a related Tribal
8 organization, or territory, to receive a payment under this
9 section shall designate a lead agency (such as a tribal or
10 territorial agency or joint interagency office) for the ad-
11 ministration of the preschool program of the Indian Tribe
12 or territory, under this section.

13 **SEC. 306. GRANTS TO LOCALITIES AND HEAD START EX-**
14 **PANSION IN NONPARTICIPATING STATES.**

15 (a) ELIGIBLE LOCALITY DEFINED.—In this section,
16 the term “eligible locality” means a city, county, or other
17 unit of general local government, a local educational agen-
18 cy, or a Head Start agency.

19 (b) GRANTS TO LOCALITIES.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consulta-
21 tion with the Secretary of Education, shall use funds
22 reserved in section 302(b)(5) to award local uni-
23 versal preschool grants, as determined by the Sec-
24 retary of Health and Human Services, to eligible lo-
25 calities located in States that have not received pay-

1 ments under section 303. The Secretary shall award
2 the grants to eligible localities in a State from the
3 allotment made for that State under paragraph (2).
4 The Secretary shall specify the requirements for an
5 eligible locality to conduct a preschool program
6 under this section which shall, to the greatest extent
7 practicable, be consistent with the requirements ap-
8 plicable to States under this title, for a universal,
9 high-quality, free, and inclusive preschool program.

10 (2) ALLOTMENTS.—For each State described in
11 paragraph (1), the Secretary shall allot for the State
12 for a fiscal year an amount that bears the same rela-
13 tionship to the funds appropriated under section
14 302(b)(5) for the fiscal year as the number of chil-
15 dren from families with family incomes at or below
16 200 percent of the poverty line, and who are under
17 the age of 6, in the State bears to the total number
18 of all such children in all States described in para-
19 graph (1).

20 (3) APPLICATION.—To receive a grant from the
21 corresponding State allotment under this section, an
22 eligible locality shall submit an application to the
23 Secretary at such time, in such manner, and con-
24 taining such information as the Secretary may re-
25 quire. The requirements for the application shall, to

1 the greatest extent practicable, be consistent with
2 the State plan requirements applicable to States
3 under this title.

4 (c) HEAD START EXPANSION IN NONPARTICIPATING
5 STATES.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall use
7 funds appropriated under section 302(b)(5), to make
8 awards to Head Start agencies in a State described
9 in subsection (b)(1) to carry out the purposes of the
10 Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) in such
11 State.

12 (2) RULE.—For purposes of carrying out the
13 Head Start Act in circumstances not involving
14 awards under this subsection, funds awarded under
15 paragraph (1) shall not be included in the calcula-
16 tion of a “base grant” as such term is defined in
17 section 640(a)(7)(A) of the Head Start Act (42
18 U.S.C. 9835(a)(7)(A)).

19 (3) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term
20 “Head Start agency” means an entity designated or
21 eligible to be designated as a Head Start agency
22 under section 641(a)(1) of the Head Start Act (42
23 U.S.C. 9836(a)(1)) or as an Early Head Start agen-
24 cy (by receiving a grant) under section 645A(a) of
25 such Act (42 U.S.C. 9840a(a)).

1 (d) PRIORITY FOR SERVING UNDERSERVED COMMU-
2 NITIES.—In making determinations to award a grant or
3 make an award under this section, the Secretary shall give
4 priority to entities serving communities with a high per-
5 centage of children from families with family incomes at
6 or below 200 percent of the poverty line.

7 **SEC. 307. ALLOWABLE SOURCES OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.**

8 For purposes of calculating the amount of the non-
9 Federal share, as determined under section 303(b)(3), re-
10 lating to a payment under section 303(b), a State's non-
11 Federal share—

12 (1) may be in cash or in-kind, fairly evaluated,
13 including facilities or property, equipment, or serv-
14 ices;

15 (2) shall include any increase in amounts spent
16 by the State to expand half-day kindergarten pro-
17 grams in the State, as of the day before the date of
18 enactment of this Act, into full day kindergarten
19 programs;

20 (3) shall not include contributions being used as
21 a non-Federal share or match for another Federal
22 award;

23 (4) shall be provided from State or local
24 sources, contributions from philanthropy or other

1 private organizations, or a combination of such
2 sources and contributions; and

3 (5) shall count not more than 100 percent of
4 the State's current spending on prekindergarten pro-
5 grams, calculated as the average amount of such
6 spending by the State for fiscal years 2023, 2024,
7 and 2025, toward the State's non-Federal share.

8 **SEC. 308. MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—If a State reduces its combined
10 fiscal effort per child for the State preschool program
11 (whether a publicly funded preschool program or a pro-
12 gram under this title) or through State supplemental as-
13 sistance funds for Head Start programs assisted under the
14 Head Start Act, or through any State spending on early
15 childhood programs or preschool services for any fiscal
16 year that a State receives payments under section 303(b)
17 (referred to in this paragraph as the “reduction fiscal
18 year”) relative to the previous fiscal year, the Secretary,
19 in collaboration with the Secretary of Education, shall re-
20 duce support for such State under such subsection by the
21 same amount as the total reduction in that State fiscal
22 effort for such reduction fiscal year.

23 (b) WAIVER.—The Secretary, in collaboration with
24 the Secretary of Education, may waive the requirements
25 of subsection (a) if—

1 (1) the Secretaries determine that a waiver
2 would be appropriate due to a precipitous decline in
3 the financial resources of a State as a result of un-
4 foreseen economic hardship, or a natural disaster,
5 that has necessitated across-the-board reductions in
6 State services during the 5-year period preceding the
7 date of the determination, including for early child-
8 hood education programs; or

9 (2) due to the circumstance of a State requiring
10 reductions in specific programs, including early
11 childhood education programs, the State presents to
12 the Secretaries a justification and demonstration
13 why other programs could not be reduced and how
14 early childhood education programs in the State will
15 not be disproportionately harmed by such State re-
16 ductions.

17 **SEC. 309. SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.**

18 Funds received under this title shall be used to sup-
19 plement and not supplant other Federal, State, and local
20 public funds expended on prekindergarten programs in the
21 State on the date of enactment of this Act, calculated as
22 the average amount of such Federal, State, and local pub-
23 lic funds expended for fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025.

1 **SEC. 310. NONDISCRIMINATION PROVISIONS.**

2 The following provisions of law shall apply to any pro-
3 gram or activity that receives funds provided under this
4 title:

5 (1) Title IX of the Education Amendments of
6 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.).

7 (2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42
8 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.).

9 (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of
10 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794).

11 (4) The Americans with Disabilities Act of
12 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

13 **SEC. 311. MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT.**

14 (a) REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS
15 AND STATE PLAN.—The Secretary shall review and mon-
16 itor compliance of States, territories, Tribal entities, and
17 local entities with this title and State compliance with the
18 State plan described in section 303(e), including a process
19 for progress updates on the requirements described in sec-
20 tion 303(e)(1).

21 (b) ISSUANCE OF RULE.—The Secretary shall estab-
22 lish by rule procedures for—

23 (1) receiving, processing, and determining the
24 validity of complaints or findings concerning any
25 failure of a State to comply with the State plan or
26 any other requirement of this title;

1 (2) notifying a State when the Secretary has
2 determined there has been a failure by the State to
3 comply with a requirement of this title; and

4 (3) imposing sanctions under this section for
5 such a failure.

6 **SEC. 312. REPORTING.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Each State that receives a pay-
8 ment under section 303 shall prepare an annual report,
9 in such manner and containing such information as the
10 Secretary of Health and Human Services may reasonably
11 require.

12 (b) CONTENTS.—A report prepared under subpara-
13 graph (a) shall contain, at a minimum—

14 (1) a description of the manner in which the
15 State has used the funds made available through the
16 payment and a report of the expenditures made with
17 the funds;

18 (2) a summary of the State's progress toward
19 providing access to high-quality preschool programs
20 for eligible children;

21 (3) the number and percentage of children in
22 the State participating in eligible preschool pro-
23 grams, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, family in-
24 come, child age, disability, and whether the children

are homeless children, children in foster care, or dual language learners;

(4) data on the number and percentage of children in the State participating in public kindergarten programs, disaggregated by race, family income, child age, disability, and whether the children are homeless children, children in foster care, or dual language learners, with information on whether such programs are offered—

(A) for a full day; and

(B) at no cost to families;

(5) data on the kindergarten readiness of children across the State;

(6) data on recruitment and retention of early childhood staff disaggregated by provider type, and age of children served; and

(7) data regarding coordination efforts with other child care and early childhood education programs, including those funded under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.).

TITLE IV—HEAD START EXTENDED DURATION

SEC. 401. EXTENDED DURATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9801 et seq.) is amended—

1 (1) by redesignating section 657C (42 U.S.C.
2 9852c) as section 657D; and

3 (2) by inserting after section 657B (42 U.S.C.
4 9852b) the following:

5 **“SEC. 657C. EXTENDED DURATION.**

6 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make grants
7 to Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agen-
8 cies) funded under this subchapter to enable such agen-
9 cies—

10 “(1) to provide access to a full school year and
11 a full school day of services;

12 “(2) in the case of a migrant and seasonal
13 Head Start agency, to provide access to additional
14 service hours to ensure continuous Head Start serv-
15 ices as determined by the Secretary; or

16 “(3) in the case of a Head Start agency (in-
17 cluding an Early Head Start agency) that already
18 meets the full-day, full-year services needs within its
19 community, to enhance the quality of Head Start
20 services (including Early Head Start services) pro-
21 vided to children served by such agency.

22 “(b) APPLICATION.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a
24 grant under this section, a Head Start agency shall
25 submit an application at such time and in such man-

1 ner as the Secretary may require. Such application
2 shall include—

3 “(A) evidence of—

4 “(i) the number and percentage of
5 slots—

6 “(I) in the agency’s Head Start
7 center-based programs (that are not
8 Early Head Start programs)—

9 “(aa) that are currently
10 funded (as of the date of submis-
11 sion of the application); and

12 “(bb) in which services are
13 provided for at least the equiva-
14 lent of 1,020 hours per year; and

15 “(II) in the agency’s Early Head
16 Start center-based programs—

17 “(aa) that are currently
18 funded (as of that date); and

19 “(bb) in which services are
20 provided for at least the equiva-
21 lent of 1,380 hours per year; and

22 “(ii) the number and percentage of
23 slots, in the agency’s Head Start family
24 child care programs—

1 “(I) that are currently funded
2 (as of that date); and

3 “(II) in which services are pro-
4 vided for at least the equivalent of
5 1,380 hours per year;

6 “(B) a description of an approach, using
7 the current community-wide strategic planning
8 and needs assessment described in section
9 640(g)(1)(C) and current program schedule
10 (current as of the date of submission of the ap-
11 plication), that transitions all of the agency’s
12 Head Start programs to a full school day, full
13 school year program schedule; and

14 “(C) a budget justification that estimates
15 the supplemental funding necessary to provide
16 for incremental ongoing operating costs for the
17 extended hours of service under such a program
18 schedule for the current enrollment in the agen-
19 cy’s Head Start programs.

20 “(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

21 “(A) MIGRANT AND SEASONAL HEAD
22 START.—

23 “(i) IN GENERAL.—A migrant and
24 seasonal Head Start agency may apply for
25 a grant described in subsection (a) without

1 meeting the requirements specified in para-
2 graph (1) to ensure continuous Head Start
3 services are provided to children enrolled in
4 a migrant and seasonal Head Start pro-
5 gram. To be eligible to receive the grant,
6 the agency shall submit an application at
7 such time and in such manner as the Sec-
8 retary may require.

9 “(ii) PRIORITY.—In making grants to
10 applicants described in clause (i), the Sec-
11 retary shall give priority to a migrant and
12 seasonal Head Start agency operating for
13 fewer than 8 months per year.

14 “(B) FULL-DAY, FULL-YEAR HEAD START
15 AGENCIES.—

16 “(i) IN GENERAL.—A Head Start
17 agency (including an Early Head Start
18 agency) that certifies to the Secretary that
19 it is meeting the full-day, full-year need
20 within its community may apply for a
21 grant to enhance the quality of services
22 provided to children enrolled in its Head
23 Start program (including its Early Head
24 Start program) in accordance with sub-
25 section (c)(2).

1 “(ii) APPLICATION.—A Head Start
2 agency (including Early Head Start agen-
3 cy) that meets the requirements of clause
4 (i) shall submit an application, which shall
5 include—

6 “(I) the proposed uses of funds
7 in accordance with subsection (c)(2);
8 and

9 “(II) how such uses of funds re-
10 late to the community-wide strategic
11 planning and needs assessment de-
12 scribed under section 640(g)(1)(C).

13 “(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

14 “(1) EXTENDED DURATION.—A Head Start
15 agency that meets the requirements of paragraph
16 (1) or (2) of subsection (a) receiving a grant under
17 this section shall use the grant funds to cover the
18 costs associated with extending those hours of serv-
19 ice for the current enrollment, such as additional
20 costs for—

21 “(A) the purchase, rental, renovation, and
22 maintenance of additional facilities;

23 “(B) ongoing purchases of classroom sup-
24 plies;

1 “(C) staff providing services during the ex-
2 tended hours; and

3 “(D) professional development to staff
4 transitioning to providing services during the
5 extended hours.

6 “(2) ENHANCING PROGRAM QUALITY.—A Head
7 Start agency (including an Early Head Start agen-
8 cy) that meets the requirements of subsection (a)(3)
9 shall use funds for the activities authorized under
10 section 640(a)(5)(B).

11 “(3) EXCEPTION.—The Head Start agency
12 shall not use the grant funds to expand the number
13 of children served in the Head Start program (in-
14 cluding the Early Head Start program) of the agen-
15 cy.

16 “(d) RESERVATIONS.—

17 “(1) ACTIVITIES.—From the total amount ap-
18 propriated to carry out this section, the Secretary
19 shall—

20 “(A) for making grants for the activities
21 described in subsection (c)(1)(A), reserve
22 \$4,000,000,000 of the funds appropriated for
23 fiscal year 2026; and

1 “(B) for making grants for the activities
2 described in any of subparagraphs (B) through
3 (D) of subsection (c)(1), reserve—

4 “(i) \$833,000,000 of the funds appro-
5 priated for fiscal year 2026;

6 “(ii) \$852,000,000 of the funds ap-
7 propriated for fiscal year 2027; and

8 “(iii) \$872,000,000 of the funds ap-
9 propriated for fiscal year 2028.

10 “(2) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize
11 Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start
12 agencies) that are applying to use funds to carry out
13 the activities described in subsection (a)(1).

14 “(3) MIGRANT OR SEASONAL HEAD START PRO-
15 GRAMS.—From the amount appropriated to carry
16 out this section for a fiscal year and reserved under
17 paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall reserve 4.5
18 percent for migrant or seasonal Head Start pro-
19 grams.

20 “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
21 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this sec-
22 tion—

23 “(1) \$4,833,000,000 for fiscal year 2026;

24 “(2) \$852,000,000 for fiscal year 2027; and

25 “(3) \$872,000,000 for fiscal year 2028.

1 “(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

2 “(1) FULL SCHOOL DAY; FULL SCHOOL
3 YEAR.—The terms ‘full school day’ and ‘full school
4 year’ mean such a day and year, respectively, within
5 the meaning of the Head Start Program Perform-
6 ance standards issued under section 641A(a).

7 “(2) MIGRANT AND SEASONAL HEAD START
8 AGENCY.—The term ‘migrant and seasonal Head
9 Start agency’ means an agency that is funded under
10 this subchapter to provide a migrant and seasonal
11 Head Start program.”.

12 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 640 of the
13 Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9835) is amended—

14 (1) in subsection (a)(6), by striking “appro-
15 priated under this subchapter” each place it appears
16 and inserting “appropriated under section 639”; and

17 (2) in subsection (g)(3)(A)—

18 (A) by striking “amount appropriated”
19 each place it appears and inserting “amount
20 appropriated under section 639”;

21 (B) by striking “services provided under
22 this subchapter” and inserting “services pro-
23 vided under this subchapter (other than section
24 657C)”; and

1 (C) by striking “agency under this sub-
2 chapter” and inserting “agency under this sub-
3 chapter (other than section 657C)”.

4 **SEC. 402. APPROPRIATION FOR WAGES.**

5 (a) APPROPRIATION.—There is authorized to be ap-
6 propriated, and there is appropriated, out of any funds
7 in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated,
8 \$2,700,000,000 for fiscal year 2026 and each subsequent
9 fiscal year, to carry out subsection (b).

10 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—Using funds made available
11 under subsection (a), the Secretary of Health and Human
12 Services shall assist Head Start agencies (including Early
13 Head Start agencies) funded under the Head Start Act
14 (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), to the extent needed to ensure
15 that their teachers and staff—

16 (1) receive wages that are comparable to wages
17 for elementary educators with similar credentials
18 and experience in the State; or

19 (2) at a minimum, receive a living wage.

20 (c) APPLICATION.—In carrying out subsection (b),
21 the Secretary shall apply the Head Start Act, except to
22 the extent that subsection (b) is inconsistent with that
23 Act.

○