

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5130

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Early Learning & K-12 Education, January 29, 2025

**Title:** An act relating to eliminating child care licensing fees.

**Brief Description:** Eliminating child care licensing fees.

**Sponsors:** Senators Wilson, C., Bateman, Chapman, Christian, Krishnadasan, Lias, Nobles, Saldaña and Wellman.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/14/25, 1/29/25 [DP-WM].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Prohibits the Department of Children, Youth, and Families from charging fees to the licensee for obtaining a child care license.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair, K-12; Wilson, C., Vice Chair, Early Learning; Harris, Ranking Member; Cortes, Dozier, Hansen, Krishnadasan and McCune.

**Staff:** Ailey Kato (786-7434)

**Background:** Current state law requires the secretary of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to charge fees to the licensee for obtaining a child care license. The secretary has the discretion to waive fees in certain circumstances.

Fees charged must be based on, but must not exceed, the cost to DCYF and may include costs of necessary inspection. DCYF must establish the fees in rule.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The annual fee for family home providers is \$30, and the annual fee for child care centers is \$125 for the first 12 children plus \$12 for each additional child.

**Summary of Bill:** DCYF is prohibited from charging fees to the licensee for obtaining a child care license.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: The licensing fee can sometimes discourage the opening of child care facilities. Removing this fee can help address child care deserts, help child care providers who play a critical role in economic recovery and development, and help families and children. Child care centers care for about 80 percent of children in licensed child care. Families face significant child care costs. Infant child care is more expensive than in-state tuition at public universities. Waiving licensing fees occurred during the pandemic, and it helped providers stay open and their bottom line, because their margins are so thin.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Claire Wilson, Prime Sponsor; Amy Anderson, Washington Childcare Centers Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.