

HB1321/573921/1

BY: Ways and Means Committee

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 1321
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in the sponsor line, strike “**Delegate Palakovich Carr**” and substitute “**Delegates Palakovich Carr, McCaskill, Mireku-North, Addison, Ebersole, Feldmark, Pasteur, Patterson, Roberson, Vogel, Wilkins, Wims, and Young**”; in line 2, strike “**Enrollment**” and substitute “**Application Process**”; strike beginning with “prohibiting” in line 3 down through “assist” in line 7 and substitute “**requiring the State Department of Education to identify, inform, and assist Child Care Scholarship**”; in line 8, after “prekindergarten” insert “**, Head Start, and Early Head Start**”; in line 9, after “conditions;” insert “**repealing a process for presumptive eligibility in the Program;**”; in line 10, after “conditions;” insert “**requiring copays for certain individuals under the Program subject to certain conditions;**”; and strike in their entirety lines 16 through 21, inclusive.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On pages 3 and 4, strike beginning with “**(I)**” in line 30 on page 3 down through “**(I)**” in line 21 on page 4.

On page 4, in line 23, strike “**THE**” and substitute “**:**”

(I) THE;

In line 24, after “**ARTICLE**” insert “**OR**”

(II) A HEAD START OR EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM;

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in line 25, strike “(II)” and substitute “(2)”; in line 26, strike “SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS”; in the same line, after “PARAGRAPH” insert “(1) OF THIS SUBSECTION”; in line 27, after “PROGRAM” insert “, HEAD START PROGRAM, OR EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM”; in line 29, strike “1.” and substitute “(1)”; and in the same line, strike “SLOTS” and substitute “, HEAD START, OR EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS”.

On page 5, in lines 1, 4, 6, and 9, strike “2.”, “3.”, “(III)”, and “(IV)”, respectively, and substitute “(II)”, “(III)”, “(3)”, and “(4)”, respectively; strike beginning with “CONTACT” in line 1 down through the first “PREKINDERGARTEN” in line 2 and substitute “HOW TO CONTACT”; in line 2, after “WHO” insert “MAY”; in the same line, strike the second “PREKINDERGARTEN” and substitute “PROGRAM”; strike beginning with “PUBLICLY” in line 4 down through “PREKINDERGARTEN” in line 5 and substitute “THE PROGRAMS”; in line 6, strike “ASSIST” and substitute “PROVIDE”; in line 7, strike “SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS”; in the same line, after “PARAGRAPH” insert “(1) OF THIS SUBSECTION”; in the same line, after “WITH” insert “INFORMATION ON”; in line 8, strike “PUBLICLY FUNDED PREKINDERGARTEN”; in the same line, strike “PROCESS” and substitute “PROCESSES”; strike beginning with “THE” in line 10 down through “PREKINDERGARTEN” in line 11 and substitute “A”; strike in their entirety lines 22 through 24, inclusive; in line 28, strike “(1)”; and strike beginning with “(i)” in line 29 down through “Program” in line 30 and substitute “(1)

PROVIDE TO PROGRAM APPLICANTS INFORMATION ON INCOME-BASED GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AND TAX CREDITS FOR WHICH THE APPLICANTS MAY BE ELIGIBLE”.

On page 6, in line 1, strike “(ii)” and substitute “(2)”.

On pages 6 and 7, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 4 on page 6 through line 33 on page 7, inclusive.

On page 8, in line 19, after “ANNUAL” insert “HOUSEHOLD”; strike beginning with the first “OF” in line 19 down through “RESIDES” in line 20 and substitute “AT OR BELOW THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE”; strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 22 on page 8 through line 3 on page 9, inclusive, and substitute “(3) THE DEPARTMENT MAY AWARD PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS UNDER THE PROGRAM THROUGH A SLIDING FEE SCALE FOR COPAYMENTS THAT:

(I) APPLIES TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO:

1. HAS AN ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME ABOVE THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE; AND

2. IS NOT DESCRIBED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)(I) OF THIS SUBSECTION;

(II) IS BASED ON AN INDIVIDUAL’S ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME ABOVE THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE;

(III) REQUIRES AN INDIVIDUAL TO PROVIDE AN INCREASED PERCENTAGE OF THE INDIVIDUAL’S ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME AS A COPAY AS THE INDIVIDUAL’S INCOME INCREASES;

(IV) INCREASES COPAY PERCENTAGES GRADUALLY BETWEEN HOUSEHOLD INCOME CATEGORIES, CULMINATING IN A MAXIMUM COPAY NOT EXCEEDING 7% OF AN INDIVIDUAL’S ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR AN INDIVIDUAL WITH THE HIGHEST INCOME CATEGORY UNDER THE PROGRAM;

(V) INCLUDES A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME CATEGORIES TO MINIMIZE SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN COPAY AMOUNTS FOR AN INDIVIDUAL WHO MOVES FROM ONE HOUSEHOLD INCOME CATEGORY TO ANOTHER; AND

(VI) REQUIRES A COPAY FOR EACH CHILD IN A FAMILY RECEIVING A PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIP, BUT REQUIRES A LOWER COPAY AMOUNT FOR EACH SUBSEQUENT CHILD.

(4) (I) SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE DEPARTMENT MAY SET A MINIMUM COPAY AMOUNT FOR A PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD UNDER THE PROGRAM.

(II) A MINIMUM COPAY AMOUNT MAY NOT BE MORE THAN \$10 EACH MONTH.”;

On page 9, strike in their entirety lines 19 through 27, inclusive, and substitute

“SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, in order to fulfill the requirement to share information about publicly funded prekindergarten slots with applicants to the Child Care Scholarship Program under § 9.5–111(e) of the Education Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act, the State Department of Education:

(1) may, before the date on which the Department implements the Early Childhood Pre–K Enrollment System for publicly funded prekindergarten, provide information on available publicly funded prekindergarten slots in the county in which the applicant resides as of the most recent enrollment count; and

(2) shall, beginning on the date the Department implements the Early Childhood Pre–K Enrollment System for publicly funded prekindergarten, provide up–

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to-date information on available publicly funded prekindergarten slots in the county in which the applicant resides.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) If the State Department of Education implements a system of copayments for the Child Care Scholarship Program in accordance with § 9.5–113(d) of the Education Article, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act, the Department shall provide ample notice of incoming copayments, notifying current scholarship recipients and the child care providers that accept the scholarships multiple times, beginning with a first notice at least 90 days before a system of copayments is implemented.

(b) (1) On or before December 1, 2027, the State Department of Education shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on a system of copayments for the Child Care Scholarship Program adopted in accordance with § 9.5–113(d) of the Education Article, as enacted Section 1 of this Act.

(2) The report shall include information on:

(i) income bands used to generate copayments;

(ii) the number of scholarships in each income band; and

(iii) the average copayment in each income band.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) The State Department of Education shall monitor the waitlist for the Child Care Scholarship Program in effect on July 1, 2026.

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(b) (1) If the Department determines that there will no longer be any applicants on the waitlist within 6 months, the Department shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on:

(i) the possibility of the waitlist ending; and

(ii) whether the Child Care Scholarship Program should include a process that allows applicants to the program to enroll through presumptive eligibility.

(2) In issuing its report, the Department shall review the presumptive eligibility process in place before July 1, 2026, and consider possible changes to make the program more effective.”;

strike beginning with the second comma in line 28 down through the first comma in line 29; and strike beginning with the period in line 29 down through “effect” in line 32 and substitute “, contingent on the taking effect of Chapter (H.B. 849) of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2026, and if Chapter (H.B. 849) does not take effect, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be null and void”.