

**[DISCUSSION DRAFT]**118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out an early childhood educator loan assistance program, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to carry out an early childhood educator loan assistance program, and for other purposes.

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 Workforce

5       Development Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR LOAN ASSISTANCE**2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of Health and  
4 Human Services may carry out a program of entering into  
5 contracts with eligible early childhood educators under  
6 which such educators agree to serve for a period of 5 years  
7 as early childhood educators with a qualified employer, in  
8 consideration of the Federal Government agreeing to  
9 repay, for each year of such service, not more than \$6,000  
10 of the principal and interest of the educational loans of  
11 such educators.

12 (b) RECERTIFICATION.—An eligible early childhood  
13 educator seeking to continue to receive payments under  
14 this section shall submit on an annual basis to the Sec-  
15 retary such information as the Secretary may require to  
16 certify that the educator is continuing to meet the criteria  
17 to be considered an eligible early childhood educator.

18 (c) MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF LOAN.—The total amount  
19 of payments received by an eligible early childhood educa-  
20 tor under this section may not exceed the total amount  
21 of the principal and interest of the educational loans of  
22 such educator.

23 (d) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.—The  
24 following provisions of the National Health Service Corps  
25 Loan Assistance Program established in subpart III of  
26 part D of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l

1 et seq.) shall apply to the program established under this  
2 section in the same manner and to the same extent as  
3 such provisions apply to the National Health Service  
4 Corps Loan Assistance Program:

5 (1) Paragraphs (1) through (3) of section  
6 338B(c) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 254l-1(c); relating  
7 to application information, understandability, and  
8 availability).

9 (2) Section 338B(c)(4) of such Act (42 U.S.C.  
10 254l-1(c)(4); relating to recruitment and retention).

11 (3) Section 338B(d) of such Act (42 U.S.C.  
12 254l-1(d); relating to factors considered in providing  
13 contracts).

14 (4) Section 338(e) of such Act (42 U.S.C.  
15 254l-1(e); relating to the approval required for par-  
16 ticipation).

17 (5) Section 338B(f) of such Act (42 U.S.C.  
18 254l-1(f); relating to contents of contracts).

19 (6) Section 338B(g) of such Act (42 U.S.C.  
20 254l-1(g); relating to payments, including repay-  
21 ment schedule and tax liability).

22 (e) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 5 years  
23 after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary  
24 shall submit to the Congress a report on the implemen-  
25 tation of this section.

1 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (i) has outstanding Federal direct  
8 loans obtained for purposes of pursuing an  
9 associate's degree, including a child devel-  
0 opment associate credential, a bachelor's  
1 degree, a graduate degree, or a combined  
2 bachelor and master's degree, in early  
3 childhood education or a related field from  
4 an accredited institution (including any  
5 such loan for which the individual is en-  
6 rolled in an income-based repayment plan);  
7 and

18 (ii) is in good standing with respect to  
19 the loans referred to in clause (i); and

20 (B) agrees to—

(i) serve as an early childhood educator with a qualified employer for a period of not less than 5 years; and

1 (ii) make timely payments with re-  
2 spect to the loans described in subpara-  
3 graph (A)(i).

11 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
12 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
13 \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2030.

#### 14 SEC. 3. GRANTS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS.

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than 180  
16 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
17 retary of Education (referred to in this section as the  
18 “Secretary”) shall carry out a program under which the  
19 Secretary makes payments to institutions of higher edu-  
20 cation with a qualified early childhood educator program  
21 to enable such institutions to make grants, on a competi-  
22 tive basis, to eligible individuals who file an application  
23 and agreement in accordance with subsections (b) and (c).

24 (b) APPLICATIONS.—

17 (B) the grant is renewed not more than  
18 three times, for a total of not more than four  
19 academic years for each eligible recipient.

20 (c) SERVICE OBLIGATION.—

21 (1) AGREEMENTS TO SERVE.—Each application  
22 under subsection (b) shall include, or be accom-  
23 panied by—

24 (A) an agreement by the applicant that—

1 (i) in the event that the applicant re-  
2 ceives a grant under this section, the appli-  
3 cant shall—

4 (I) not later than 4 years after  
5 completing the qualified early child-  
6 hood program for which the applicant  
7 will be receiving such grant, serve as  
8 a full-time or part-time educator in a  
9 licensed early learning program for a  
10 total of not less than one academic  
11 year, and four additional months for  
12 each subsequent grant renewal; and

13 (II) submit a certification of  
14 service in a licensed early learning  
15 program in such form as the Sec-  
16 retary may determine necessary; and

1 (B) a plain-language disclosure form devel-  
2 oped by the Secretary that clearly describes the  
3 nature of the grant award, the service obliga-  
4 tion, and the loan repayment requirements that  
5 are the consequence of the failure to complete  
6 the service obligation.

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in  
17 subparagraph (B), in the event that any recipi-  
18 ent of a grant under this section fails or refuses  
19 to comply with the service obligation in the  
20 agreement under paragraph (1), the sum of the  
21 amounts of any grants received by such recipi-  
22 ent shall, upon a determination of such a fail-  
23 ure or refusal in such service obligation, be  
24 treated as a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Staf-  
25 ford Loan under part D of title IV of the High-

er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq.) except that—

5 (ii) such amounts shall be subject to  
6 repayment in accordance with—

7 (I) an income-contingent or in-  
8 come-based repayment plan described  
9 in subparagraph (D) or (E) of section  
10 455(d)(1) of the Higher Education  
11 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(d)(1)),  
12 respectively, if the individual meets  
13 the eligibility requirements for such a  
14 repayment plan; and

15 (II) such other terms and condi-  
16 tions as are specified by the Secretary  
17 in regulations promulgated under this  
18 section.

19 (B) HARSHSHIP EXTENSION.—In the case  
20 of a recipient who has made a good faith effort  
21 to find employment in a licensed early learning  
22 program and has been unable to acquire such  
23 employment, the Secretary is authorized to pro-  
24 vide a hardship extension for a period of not  
25 more than one year to grant recipients who fail

1           to complete their service requirement within the  
2           4-year period described in paragraph (1)(A)(i).

3           (d) GRANT AMOUNT.—An eligible individual selected  
4 to receive a grant or a grant renewal under this section  
5 shall receive a grant in an amount not to exceed \$4,000  
6 for each academic year during which the individual is en-  
7 rolled on a full-time or part-time basis in the qualified  
8 early childhood educator program for which the grant was  
9 awarded.

10          (e) GRANT DISBURSEMENT.—Payments under this  
11 section to an eligible institution shall be made in accord-  
12 ance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary for  
13 such purpose and in such manner as will best accomplish  
14 the purposes of this section, provided—

15           (1) any disbursement made by crediting a grant  
16 recipient's account shall be limited to tuition and  
17 fees and other materials necessary for the comple-  
18 tion of coursework in a qualified early childhood ed-  
19 ucator program as determined by the Secretary; and

20           (2) not less than 85 percent of any funds pro-  
21 vided to an eligible institution under subsection (a)  
22 shall be advanced to the institution prior to the start  
23 of each payment period and shall be based upon an  
24 amount requested by the institution as needed to  
25 cover the total cost of grants awarded to eligible re-

1       cipients until such time as the Secretary determines  
2       and publishes in the Federal Register with an oppor-  
3       tunity for comment, an alternative payment system  
4       that provides payments to institutions in an accurate  
5       and timely manner, except that this sentence shall  
6       not be construed to limit the authority of the Sec-  
7       retary to place an institution on a reimbursement  
8       system of payment.

9       (f) DIRECT PAYMENT.—Nothing in this section shall  
10      be construed to prohibit the Secretary from making a  
11      grant directly to an eligible individual in a case in which  
12      an institution of higher education with a qualified early  
13      childhood educator program does not participate in the  
14      program under subsection (a).

15      (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16           (1) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL.—The term “eligible  
17      individual” means an individual who is enrolled on  
18      a full-time or part-time basis in a qualified early  
19      childhood educator program.

20           (2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The  
21      term “institution of higher education” has the  
22      meaning given that term in section 102 of the High-  
23      er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

24           (3) QUALIFIED EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR  
25      PROGRAM.—The term “qualified early childhood ed-

1       “Educator program” means a course of study leading to  
2       an associate’s degree or a certificate in early child-  
3       hood education or a related field from an institution  
4       of higher education.

13 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be  
15 appropriated to carry out this section \$10,000,000  
16 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2029.