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Morrison, Parker Selby, Romer, Michael Smith, Wilson-  
Anton

DELAWARE STATE SENATE  
152nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE BILL NO. 59

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE RATE OF PURCHASE OF CARE FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.

1 WHEREAS, child care is an essential infrastructure for Delaware's economy that supports today's workforce; and

2 WHEREAS, there remain shortages in child care providers throughout the state; and

3 WHEREAS, quality early learning opportunities are critical to children's development, school readiness, and  
4 success in life; and

5 WHEREAS, Kent County and Sussex County Purchase of Care rates have been substantially lower than New  
6 Castle County rates for many years; and

7 WHEREAS, many costs across Delaware are the same, including minimum wage, food, and supplies; and

8 WHEREAS, child care programs in at least 16 other states are paid based on a statewide rate and Delaware  
9 programs deserve the same support to serve children statewide; and

10 WHEREAS, the Department of Health and Social Services has reported, through Senate Resolution 34, that their  
11 current budget funding is sufficient to cover the increased cost for fiscal year 2023.

12 NOW, THEREFORE:

13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

14 Section 1. The Department of Health and Social Services ("Department") shall pay a uniform statewide purchase  
15 of care rate to all statewide child care providers, for all age groups of children, that is no less than the New Castle County  
16 rate as determined by the 2021 Delaware Local Child Care Market Rate Survey.

17 Section 2. Section 1 of this Act takes effect on May 1 following its enactment into law. The Department shall  
18 reimburse child care providers for the month of April 2023 based upon the criteria under Section 1 of this Act.

### SYNOPSIS

This bill directs the Department to pay a statewide rate to all child care providers that is aligned with the New Castle County rate through existing program funds. This service provides support for families with children birth to 12 years of age with access to child care to enable the caretaker to hold a job, obtain training or meet the special needs of the parent or child. The bill would pay licensed child care providers statewide at the reimbursement rate of New Castle County as determined by the 2021 Delaware Local Child Care Market Rate Survey.

Author: Senator Gay