**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO CREATE A STUDY COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE ALL POLICY, PLANNING, AND SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES AFFECTING CHILDCARE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO WORKING PARENTS IN THIS STATE, TO PROVIDE FOR THE STUDY COMMITTEE’S MEMBERSHIP, AND TO REQUIRE THE STUDY COMMITTEE TO REPORT ITS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2010, AT WHICH TIME THE STUDY COMMITTEE IS ABOLISHED.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

Whereas, quality childcare programs are essential to this State’s working families and to the development of our young people into productive citizens and future leaders; and

Whereas, for many children, childcare providers offer and maintain the child’s first learning environment outside of the home; and

Whereas, the quality of childcare is important because it is closely linked with children’s social, cognitive, and language development; and

Whereas, children in high quality early childhood programs are more likely to be emotionally secure and self‑confident, proficient in language use, and able to regulate impulsive inclinations; and

Whereas, sixty‑one percent of children under the age of six in this State have working parents who rely on others to provide childcare and education; and

Whereas, licensed childcare facilities in this State employ more than thirteen thousand five hundred childcare professionals and generate more than three hundred fifty million dollars in business revenue for our State; and

Whereas, the study of the cost of childcare in this State, and especially the relation between cost and quality of services, is fairly limited. Now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. (A) There is created the Childcare Costs Study Committee. This committee shall review, examine, and make recommendations regarding all policy, planning, and service delivery issues affecting both the cost and quality of childcare services available to working parents in this State.

(B) The committee is composed of:

(1) three members of the public at‑large appointed by the Governor;

(2) three members of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tempore; and

(3) three members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(C) At the first meeting of the committee, the members shall elect a chairperson from among the committee members.

(D) A vacancy occurring on the committee must be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(E) The staffing for the committee must be provided by the appropriate committees of the Senate and House of Representatives that oversee legislation affecting childcare facilities and childcare professionals in this State.

(F) The committee shall submit its report to the General Assembly and Governor before January 1, 2010, at which time the Childcare Costs Study Committee is abolished.

SECTION 2. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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