

Feigenholtz Legislation to Keep Day Care Centers Open Passes House

Legislation sponsored by State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz to keep state supported day care centers open for the remainder of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012 passed the Illinois House.

"Child care affords parents the opportunity to go to work and support their families, this measure will help preserve these valuable services," Feigenholtz said. "During these dire economic times, we should not be asking parents to choose between going to work and child care."

Earlier this month, the Illinois Department of Human Services, which oversees the funding for state child care services, notified child care providers that payments would not be made until July due to lack of state funds.

This announcement led many child care providers to inform parents that their rates would increase significantly until the state reimbursed them.

Senate Bill 2450 shifts funding levels in the current budget to allocate an additional \$73.6 million for the remainder of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012. Without this, child care providers would not receive funding until after July 1, 2012 when the next fiscal year budget takes effect. By shifting existing funding from budget lines that have not used their full allotment, the bill is cost-neutral and does not represent any new state spending.

"By passing this measure we can protect day care centers that don't have the ability to access lines of credit and savings," said Feigenholtz. "I am urging the Senate to quickly pass this bill so we can avoid a disruption in child care services that could force many parents out of the workforce."

Senate Bill 2450 will need the approval of the Senate and governor before payments to child care providers can be made.