



COLORADO CENTER
on LAW & POLICY

Expanding access to child care strengthens families, the economy

SB-003, Sponsors: Senator Nicholson, Representative Pettersen

January 31, 2014

SB-003 SUPPORT

*Colorado Child Care
Assistance Program
Sponsors: Sen. Nicholson,
Rep. Pettersen*

Proposal Highlights:

- Provides counties with additional funds for expanding and improving CCCAP.
- Counties can choose to serve more families, improve quality and address the cliff effect.
- Strengthens Colorado's labor force and economy by providing affordable child care to more working families.
- Institutes a new reporting requirement to ensure CCCAP serves our children and communities well.

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Expanding the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program will provide needed support for more low-income families and strengthen the economy as more parents are able to afford working. Bill No. 11 will support quality improvements among CCCAP providers, provide a solution for the cliff effect and, most importantly, provide thousands of Colorado working families with access to CCCAP for the first time. All of this will be accomplished without placing additional significant financial burdens on the counties. Enrolling thousands more children in CCCAP is key to getting more parents engaged with the labor force, boosting their chances for full-time employment and economic self-sufficiency while simultaneously boosting Colorado's economy.

The bill increases the capacity of CCCAP, which has fallen behind in recent years

Since the start of the recession, CCCAP has failed to keep pace with the rise in poverty. A smaller percentage of potentially eligible children were served in 2012 than in 2007, according to CCLP estimates.¹ CCCAP served about 27 percent of potentially eligible children in 2012. That is roughly 6 percent lower than in 2007, when the CCCAP program served an estimated 33 percent of the eligible population.

The decline in the rate of eligible children served by CCCAP is largely due to a decrease in state funding and an increase in the number of potentially eligible children across the state. Between 2007 to 2012:

- state funding for CCCAP decreased by more than 28 percent;
- CCCAP served about 2,000, or six percent, fewer children; and
- Child poverty and the number of children potentially eligible for CCCAP increased 13 percent.

The bill would enhance the performance of CCCAP in measureable ways

The bill establishes a special fund that would allow counties to opt into programs that expand capacity, improve quality and address the "cliff effect" by funding the pilot program which allows families to remain enrolled in CCCAP even with an increase in income. The bill would not affect the current CCCAP block grant appropriations process. The bill would also institute new reporting by the state that would enhance transparency and accountability of CCCAP.

Supporters

9to5 Colorado

Clayton Early Learning

COLOR

Colorado Center on Law and Policy

Colorado Children's Campaign Colorado

Coalition for the Homeless

Colorado Progressive Coalition

Colorado Statewide Parent Organization

Denver Early Childhood Council

Growing Home

Project WISE

The Bell Policy Center

¹ Estimates derived using data from the Colorado Department of Human Services and the Census Bureau's American Community survey.