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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To assist parents in locating and utilizing child care that meets individual family needs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. NICKEL introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To assist parents in locating and utilizing child care that meets individual family needs.

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 “Helping Our Parents
5 Enroll (HOPE) in Child Care Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL CHILD CARE NAVIGATOR GRANTS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title XX of the Social Security
8 Act (42 U.S.C. 1397 et seq.) is amended by adding at
9 the end the following:

1 **“Subtitle D—National Child Care**
2 **Navigator Grant Program**

3 **“SEC. 2071. GRANTS.**

4 “The Secretary may make grants to eligible local
5 partners for the purpose of providing free access to infor-
6 mation, counseling, and assistance with respect to locat-
7 ing, enrolling in, and paying for child care, including
8 through programs funded under section 418 of this Act
9 or the Child Care and Development Block Grant of 1990,
10 and through the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code
11 of 1986 under which child care expenditures may be sub-
12 sidized.

13 **“SEC. 2072. GRANT APPLICATION AND PLAN REQUIRE-**
14 **MENTS.**

15 “(a) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible for a grant under
16 this subtitle, an eligible local partner shall submit an ap-
17 plication to the Secretary, at such time and in such man-
18 ner as the Secretary may provide, that includes a plan
19 to establish a program to provide free access to the infor-
20 mation, counseling, and assistance referred to in section
21 2071. As a condition of the grant, the eligible local partner
22 must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Secretary—

23 “(1) an ability to adequately provide the infor-
24 mation, counseling, and assistance; and

1 “(2) commitment to operating a program that
2 satisfies the requirements of subsection (d).

3 “(b) DURATION.—Each grant under this subtitle
4 shall be awarded for a period of 5 years, except that the
5 grantee may reapply for another 5-year period at the end
6 of each grant period, and the Secretary may terminate
7 such a grant for noncompliance with data reporting re-
8 quirements or failure to provide promised services or com-
9 ply with any grant condition.

10 “(c) AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall determine the
11 amount of any grant under this subtitle so as to maximize
12 the number of parents with access to navigators referred
13 to in subsection (d)(1).

14 “(d) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—A program satis-
15 fies the requirements of this subsection if the program—

16 “(1) establishes a system of staff members, in-
17 cluding navigators, to provide information on—

18 “(A) navigating child care systems, includ-
19 ing information on—

20 “(i) applying for subsidized child care;

21 “(ii) consumer education and informa-
22 tion about types of child care settings;

23 “(iii) navigating the child care re-
24 source and referral system funded under

1 the Child Care and Development Block
2 Grant Act of 1990; and

3 “(iv) center-based and home based
4 child care;

5 “(B) accessing such systems in languages
6 other than English and protections against non-
7 discrimination on the basis of limited English
8 proficiency under title VI of the Civil Rights
9 Act, accommodations and protections against
10 non-discrimination under the Americans with
11 Disabilities Act and section 504 of the Rehabili-
12 tation Act of 1973, and protections against
13 non-discrimination under other Federal civil
14 rights laws in child care settings; and

15 “(C) any other information specified by the
16 Secretary;

17 “(2) in conjunction with the system established
18 under paragraph (1), establishes a system of referral
19 to appropriate departments or agencies within the
20 State in which the eligible local partner is located
21 and, when appropriate, the Federal Government, for
22 other issues related to obtaining assistance (includ-
23 ing legal aid), as determined by the Secretary; and

24 “(3) establishes a community-based system of
25 education and outreach to raise public awareness of

1 and increase access to the resources described in sec-
2 tion 2071 and the availability of information, coun-
3 seling, and assistance provided by the system of
4 staff members described in paragraph (1) and the
5 system of referrals described in paragraph (2), in-
6 cluding by—

7 “(A) engaging in a robust program of cul-
8 turally and linguistically competent education
9 and outreach;

10 “(B) creating visual and written content
11 using clear and plain language;

12 “(C) tailoring materials to members of un-
13 derserved areas or populations;

14 “(D) working with employers and child
15 care providers to promote the awareness and
16 distribution of information to employees and
17 parents in the community; and

18 “(E) partnering with governmental and
19 non=governmental organizations serving work-
20 ing parents or child care providers;

21 “(4) provides for a sufficient number of staff
22 positions (which may include but may not consist en-
23 tirely of volunteer positions) necessary to provide the
24 services of the program;

1 “(5) provides for training programs for staff
2 members (including volunteer staff members) and al-
3 lows for continuous improvement processes for com-
4 munity-based strategies to ensure maximum out-
5 reach and engagement with underserved areas or
6 populations;

7 “(6) provides for the collection and dissemina-
8 tion of timely, impartial, and accurate programmatic
9 information to staff members (including volunteer
10 staff members);

11 “(7) maintains confidentiality of all personal in-
12 formation provided to navigators or program staff
13 (including volunteer staff), including by following
14 procedures set by the Secretary for destroying per-
15 sonally identifiable information and preventing it
16 from being shared with any other government entity;

17 “(8) collects non-personally identifiable data to
18 measure equitable access to the program, as de-
19 scribed in section 2073(2); and

20 “(9) provides data to the Secretary, upon re-
21 quest, regarding how individuals are being served by
22 the program, including—

23 “(A) data and details on the number of in-
24 dividuals served, as well as the type and num-
25 ber of services such individuals are receiving;

1 “(B) data and details on the problems that
2 individuals may encounter, including a lack of
3 timely payment of benefits or child care avail-
4 ability; and

5 “(C) data and details on improvements
6 that could be made at the State or Federal level
7 to promote equitable access to child care.

8 “(e) GUARANTEED NUMBER OF GRANTEES PER
9 STATE.—For each grant cycle, the Secretary shall award
10 a grant under this subtitle to at least 2 eligible local part-
11 ners in each State that is not Puerto Rico, Guam, the Vir-
12 gin Islands, American Samoa, or the Northern Mariana
13 Islands, to the extent there are a sufficient number of ap-
14 plications submitted by the entities that meet the require-
15 ments applicable with respect to the grant.

16 “(f) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT.—Funds awarded to
17 a State or county under this subtitle shall be used to sup-
18 plement, not supplant, State and Federal funds, and may
19 not be used to replace any personnel selected on a merit
20 basis.

21 **“SEC. 2073. CRITERIA FOR MAKING GRANTS.**

22 ““In determining whether to make a grant under this
23 subtitle to an eligible local partner, the Secretary shall
24 consider the commitment of the eligible local partner to—

1 “(1) carrying out the program described in sec-
2 tion 2072; and

3 “(2) promoting equitable access to the program
4 in the State in which the eligible local partner is lo-
5 cated, including as the equitable access pertains to—

6 “(A) race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual
7 orientation, disability, economic status, religion,
8 citizenship, or age;

9 “(B) geographic area; and

10 “(C) other factors as determined by the
11 Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of
12 the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor.

13 **“SEC. 2074. LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-**
14 **PRIATIONS.**

15 “(a) GRANTS.—For grants under this subtitle, there
16 is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary not more
17 than \$500,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through
18 2029.

19 “(b) FEDERAL ADMINISTRATION.—For the provision
20 of administrative support and technical assistance for
21 grants awarded under this subtitle, there is authorized to
22 be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2025 through
23 2029 \$5,000,000 to the Secretary of Health and Human
24 Services.

1 **“SEC. 2075. DEFINITIONS.**

2 “In this subtitle:

3 “(1) ELIGIBLE LOCAL PARTNER.—The term ‘el-
4 ible local partner’ means a State, county, Indian
5 5 tribe, tribal organization, or non-profit organization
6 6 (including a labor organization) with a presence
7 7 within a State, a history of knowledge of the re-
8 8 sources described in section 2071, and a dem-
9 9 onstrated commitment to helping workers and fami-
10 10 lies.

11 “(2) INDIAN TRIBE; TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—
12 The terms ‘Indian tribe’ and ‘tribal organization’
13 have the meanings give the terms in section 4 of the
14 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
15 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

16 “(3) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means the 50
17 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico,
18 Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the
19 Northern Mariana Islands.”.

20 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
21 subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 2024.