

Capitol Day Talking Points

January 24, 2017

Background Checks:

Issue:

- Children should be safe in child care.
- Background checks will help ensure that the people who are in the business of providing child care do not have a history of violent offenses.

Pending Bills:

- HB1568 by Del. Bobby Orrock (Chair, Health, Welfare and Institutions Committee).
- SB897 by Senator Jennifer Wexton

What the bills do: They require a fingerprint background check for all licensed, regulated, or registered providers plus those who are unlicensed but who are caring for children on a child care subsidy.

Why are the bills needed? In 2015, the General Assembly passed fingerprint background check legislation for child care providers. However, the VA code is complicated and some providers were left out. So, the pending bills will make sure that the fingerprint checks are applied uniformly.

What if we don't pass a background check bill? The federal government will reduce funding for VA each year we are not in compliance with federal law by \$5 million.

License-Exempt Care:

Issue:

- In 2016, the General Assembly passed a bill to require a review of license-exempt care in Virginia. A report was issued in December with recommendations for child care safety.
- License-exempt care is really complicated.
- Virginia currently has 14 categories of license-exempt care. That means different types of center-based arrangements that are exempt from child care licensing.
- Parents think because these are centers, they are licensed.
- Parents think that the people have had background checks and training.

Pending Bills:

- SB1239 by Senator Emmett Hanger
- HB2259 by Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn

What the bills do: They incorporate the recommendations from the review to promote child care safety.

Why are the bills necessary? The current license exemptions are complicated.

- Parents assume these places are licensed and children could be at risk. There have been nearly 60 deaths in unlicensed care in Virginia over the past few years.
- We can pre-empt these tragedies by a few simple protections for children such as requiring CPR for someone on staff, background checks, and safe sleep requirements for babies.
- These are not burdensome. They are simple, common sense and protect children.