H.R. 2982, THE QUALITY CHILD CARE FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYESS ACT

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

H.R. 2982

TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE PROVIDED THROUGH FEDERAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

FEBRUARY 11 AND 12, 1998

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H.R. 2982, THE QUALITY CHILD CARE FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ACT

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1998

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT,
INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 p.m., in room 2247, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Stephen Horn (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Horn and Maloney.

Staff present: J. Russell George, staff director/chief counsel; Mark Brasher, senior policy director; John Hynes, professional staff member; Matthew Ebert, clerk; Mark Stephenson, minority professional staff member; and Ellen Rayner, minority chief clerk.

Mr. HORN. In 1987, Congress passed Public Law 100–202, which allowed day care centers to be based in Federal buildings for the convenience of Federal employees and their agencies. This program has shown explosive growth in recent years. This is the result of the emphasis the Congress and the executive branch have placed on the family friendly aspect of public service. For example, the Department of Defense operates over 800 child care centers, while GSA operates over 100. Other agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Veterans Affairs, operate over 120 such centers. That makes for over 1,000 federally operated or sponsored centers with approximately 200,000 slots for children.

We all agree that the children of Federal employees deserve safe, quality child care facilities. According to recent statistics, well over half of Federal child care centers are accredited, that compares to a national average of less than 10 percent.

In our hearing, we will examine a proposal by a distinguished member of our committee, Mr. Gilman of New York. He will appear tomorrow morning at 9:30. We will recess so we can take his testimony at 9:30 tomorrow morning. Mr. Gilman seeks to provide for enhanced standards for Federal child care centers. In addition, several other relevant legislative issues will be discussed, including an amendment to this bill that Mr. Gilman will offer. This amendment would provide that 50 percent of the spaces in federally sponsored child care centers be reserved for sons and daughters of Federal employees system-wide, as opposed to the current requirement that each center have 50 percent children of Federal employees. I will ask Ms. Clampitt from the General Services Administration to com-

ment on this proposal, which has been shared with her prior to this hearing.

[The text of H.R. 2982 follows:]

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2982

TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE PROVIDED THROUGH FEDERAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 9, 1997

MR. GILMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, and in addition to the Committees on House Oversight and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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A BILL

TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE PROVIDED THROUGH FEDERAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ACCREDITED CHILD CARE CENTER.—The term "accredited child care center" means—

(A) a center that is accredited, by a child care credentialing or accreditation entity recognized by a State, to provide child care to children in the State (except children who a tribal organization elects to serve through a center described in subparagraph (B));

(B) a center that is accredited, by a child care credentialing or accreditation entity recognized by a tribal organization, to provide child care for children served by the tribal organization;

(C) a center that is used as a Head Start center under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) and is in compliance with any applicable performance standards established by regulation under such Act for Head Start programs; or

(D) a military child development center (as defined in section 1798(1) of title 10, United States Code).

(2) CHILD CARE CREDENTIALING OR ACCREDITATION ENTITY.—The term "child care credentialing or accreditation entity" means a nonprofit private organization or public agency that—

(A) is recognized by a State agency or tribal organization; and

(B) accredits a center or credentials an individual to provide child care on the basis of—

(i) an accreditation or credentialing instrument based on peer-validated research;

(ii) compliance with applicable State and local licensing requirements, or standards described in section 658E(c)(2)(E)(ii) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)(2)(E)(ii)), as appropriate, for the center or individual;

(iii) outside monitoring of the center or individual; and

(iv) criteria that provide assurances of—

(I) compliance with age-appropriate health and safety standards at the center or by the individual;

(II) use of age-appropriate developmental and educational activities, as an integral part of the child care program carried out at the center or by the individual; and

(III) use of ongoing staff development or training activities for the staff of the center or the individual, including related skills-based testing.

(3) CREDENTIALED CHILD CARE PROFESSIONAL.—The term "credentialed child care professional" means—

(A) an individual who is credentialed, by a child care credentialing or accreditation entity recognized by a State, to provide child care to children in the State (except children who a tribal organization elects to serve through an individual described in subparagraph (B)); or

(B) an individual who is credentialed, by a child care credentialing or accreditation entity recognized by a tribal organization, to provide child care for children served by the tribal organization.

(4) STATE.—The term "State" has the meaning given the term in section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9858n).

SEC. 3. PROVIDING QUALITY CHILD CARE IN FEDERAL FACILITIES.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of General Services.

(2) ENTITY SPONSORING A CHILD CARE CENTER.—The term "entity sponsoring a child care center" means a Federal agency that operates, or an entity that enters into a contract or licensing agreement with a Federal agency to operate, a child care center.

(3) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term "Executive agency" has the meaning given the term in section 105 of title 5, United States Code, except that the term—

(A) does not include the Department of Defense; and

(B) includes the General Services Administration, with respect to the administration of a facility described in paragraph (4)(B).

(4) EXECUTIVE FACILITY.—The term "executive facility"—

(A) means a facility that is owned or leased by an Executive agency; and

(B) includes a facility that is owned or leased by the General Services Administration on behalf of a judicial office.

(5) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term "Federal agency" means an Executive agency, a judicial office, or a legislative office.

(6) JUDICIAL FACILITY.—The term "judicial facility" means a facility that is owned or leased by a judicial office (other than a facility that is also a facility described in paragraph (4)(B)).

(7) JUDICIAL OFFICE.—The term "judicial office" means an entity of the judicial branch of the Federal Government.

(8) LEGISLATIVE FACILITY.—The term "legislative facility" means a facility that is owned or leased by a legislative office.

(9) LEGISLATIVE OFFICE.—The term "legislative office" means an entity of the legislative branch of the Federal Government.

(b) EXECUTIVE BRANCH STANDARDS AND COMPLIANCE.—

(1) STATE AND LOCAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any entity sponsoring a child care center in an executive facility shall—

(i) obtain the appropriate State and local licenses for the center; and

(ii) in a location where the State or locality does not license executive facilities, comply with the appropriate State and local licensing requirements related to the provision of child care.

(B) COMPLIANCE.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) the entity shall comply, or make substantial progress (as determined by the Administrator) toward complying, with subparagraph (A); and

(ii) any contract or licensing agreement used by an Executive agency for the operation of such a child care center shall include a condition that the child care be provided by an entity that complies with the ap-

propriate State and local licensing requirements related to the provision of child care.

(2) HEALTH, SAFETY, AND FACILITY STANDARDS.—The Administrator shall by regulation establish standards relating to health, safety, facilities, facility design, and other aspects of child care that the Administrator determines to be appropriate for child care centers in executive facilities, and require child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in executive facilities to comply with the standards.

(3) ACCREDITATION STANDARDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall issue regulations requiring, to the maximum extent possible, any entity sponsoring an eligible child care center (as defined by the Administrator) in an executive facility to comply with child care center accreditation standards issued by a nationally recognized accreditation organization approved by the Administrator.

(B) COMPLIANCE.—The regulations shall require that, not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act—

(i) the entity shall comply, or make substantial progress (as determined by the Administrator) toward complying, with the standards; and

(ii) any contract or licensing agreement used by an Executive agency for the operation of such a child care center shall include a condition that the child care be provided by an entity that complies with the standards.

(C) CONTENTS.—The standards shall base accreditation on—

(i) an accreditation instrument described in section 2(2)(B);

(ii) outside monitoring described in section 2(2)(B), by—

(I) the Administrator; or

(II) a child care credentialing or accreditation entity, or other entity, with which the Administrator enters into a contract to provide such monitoring; and

(iii) the criteria described in section 2(2)(B).

(4) EVALUATION AND COMPLIANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall evaluate the compliance, with the requirements of paragraph (1) and the regulations issued pursuant to paragraphs (2) and (3), of child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in executive facilities. The Administrator may conduct the evaluation of such a child care center or entity directly, or through an agreement with another Federal agency or private entity, other than the Federal agency for which the child care center is providing services. If the Administrator determines, on the basis of such an evaluation, that the child care center or entity is not in compliance with the requirements, the Administrator shall notify the Executive agency.

(B) EFFECT OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—On receipt of the notification of noncompliance issued by the Administrator, the head of the Executive agency shall—

(i) if the entity operating the child care center is the agency—

(I) within 2 business days after the date of receipt of the notification correct any deficiencies that are determined by the Administrator to be life threatening or to present a risk of serious bodily harm;

(II) develop and provide to the Administrator a plan to correct any other deficiencies in the operation of the center and bring the center and entity into compliance with the requirements not later than 4 months after the date of receipt of the notification;

(III) provide the parents of the children receiving child care services at the center with a notification detailing the deficiencies described in subclauses (I) and (II) and actions that will be taken to correct the deficiencies;

(IV) bring the center and entity into compliance with the requirements and certify to the Administrator that the center and entity are in compliance, based on an on-site evaluation of the center conducted by an independent entity with expertise in child care health and safety; and

(V) in the event that deficiencies determined by the Administrator to be life threatening or to present a risk of serious bodily harm cannot be corrected within 2 business days after the date of receipt of the notification, close the center until such deficiencies are corrected and notify the Administrator of such closure; and

(ii) if the entity operating the child care center is a contractor or licensee of the Executive agency—

(I) require the contractor or licensee within 2 business days after the date of receipt of the notification, to correct any deficiencies that are determined by the Administrator to be life threatening or to present a risk of serious bodily harm:

(II) require the contractor or licensee to develop and provide to the head of the agency a plan to correct any other deficiencies in the operation of the center and bring the center and entity into compliance with the requirements not later than 4 months after the date of receipt of the notification;

(III) require the contractor or licensee to provide the parents of the children receiving child care services at the center with a notification detailing the deficiencies described in subclauses (I) and (II) and actions that will be taken to correct the deficiencies;

(IV) require the contractor or licensee to bring the center and entity into compliance with the requirements and certify to the head of the agency that the center and entity are in compliance, based on an on-site evaluation of the center conducted by an independent entity with expertise in child care health and safety; and

(V) in the event that deficiencies determined by the Administrator to be life threatening or to present a risk of serious bodily harm cannot be corrected within 2 business days after the date of receipt of the notification, close the center until such deficiencies are corrected and notify the Administrator of such closure, which closure shall be grounds for the immediate termination or suspension of the contract or license of the contractor or licensee.

(C) COST REIMBURSEMENT.—The Executive agency shall reimburse the Administrator for the costs of carrying out subparagraph (A) for child care centers located in an executive facility other than an executive facility of the General Services Administration. If an entity is sponsoring a child care center for 2 or more Executive agencies, the Administrator shall allocate the costs of providing such reimbursement with respect to the entity among the agencies in a fair and equitable manner, based on the extent to which each agency is eligible to place children in the center.

(c) LEGISLATIVE BRANCH STANDARDS AND COMPLIANCE.—

(1) STATE AND LOCAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS, HEALTH, SAFETY, AND FACILITY STANDARDS, AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS.—The Architect of the Capitol shall issue regulations approved by the administrative officers of the House, Senate, and all other Federal agencies, minus the Department of Defense for child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in legislative facilities, which shall be no less stringent in content and effect than the requirements of subsection (b)(1) and the regulations issued by the Administrator under paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b), except to the extent that the Architect approved by the administrative officers of the House, Senate, and all other Federal agencies, minus the Department of Defense may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the requirements and standards described in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (b) for child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in legislative facilities.

(2) EVALUATION AND COMPLIANCE.—

(A) ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL.—The Architect of the Capitol shall have the same authorities and duties with respect to the evaluation of, compliance of, and cost reimbursement for child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in legislative facilities as the Administrator has under subsection (b)(4) with respect to the evaluation of, compliance of, and cost reimbursement for such centers and entities sponsoring such centers, in executive facilities.

(B) HEAD OF A LEGISLATIVE OFFICE.—The head of a legislative office shall have the same authorities and duties with respect to the compliance of and cost reimbursement for child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in legislative facilities as the head of an Executive agency has under subsection (b)(4) with respect to the compliance of and cost reimbursement for such centers and entities sponsoring such centers, in executive facilities.

(d) JUDICIAL BRANCH STANDARDS AND COMPLIANCE.—

(1) STATE AND LOCAL LICENSING REQUIREMENTS HEALTH, SAFETY, AND FACILITY STANDARDS, AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS.—The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall issue regulations for child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in judicial facilities, which shall be no less stringent in content and effect than the requirements of subsection (b)(1) and the regulations issued by the Administrator under paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b), except to the extent that the Director may determine, for good cause shown and stated together with the regulations, that a modification of such regulations would be more effective for the implementation of the requirements and standards described in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (b) for child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in judicial facilities.

(2) EVALUATION AND COMPLIANCE.—

(A) DIRECTOR OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES COURTS.—The Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall have the same authorities and duties with respect to the evaluation of, compliance of, and cost reimbursement for child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in judicial facilities as the Administrator has under subsection (b)(4) with respect to the evaluation of, compliance of, and cost reimbursement for such centers and entities sponsoring such centers, in executive facilities.

(B) HEAD OF A JUDICIAL OFFICE.—The head of a judicial office shall have the same authorities and duties with respect to the compliance of and cost reimbursement for child care centers, and entities sponsoring child care centers, in judicial facilities as the head of an Executive agency has under subsection (b)(4) with respect to the compliance of and cost reimbursement for such centers and entities sponsoring such centers, in executive facilities.

(e) APPLICATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if 8 or more child care centers are sponsored in facilities owned or leased by an Executive agency, the Administrator shall delegate to the head of the agency the evaluation and compliance responsibilities assigned to the Administrator under subsection (b)(4)(A).

(f) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, STUDIES, AND REVIEWS.—The Administrator may provide technical assistance, and conduct and provide the results of studies and reviews, for Executive agencies, and entities sponsoring child care centers in executive facilities, on a reimbursable basis, in order to assist the entities in complying with this section. The Architect of the Capitol and the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts may provide technical assistance, and conduct and provide the results of studies and reviews, or request that the Administrator provide technical assistance, and conduct and provide the results of studies and reviews, for legislative offices and judicial offices, respectively, and entities operating child care centers in legislative facilities and judicial facilities, respectively, on a reimbursable basis, in order to assist the entities in complying with this section.

(g) COUNCIL.—The Administrator shall establish an interagency council, comprised of all Executive agencies described in subsection (e), a representative of the Office of Architect of the Capitol, and a representative of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, to facilitate cooperation and sharing of best practices, and to develop and coordinate policy, regarding the provision of child care in the Federal Government.

(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $900,000 for fiscal year 1998 and such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent fiscal year.

Mr. HORN. I now will call the first witness. That is Susan Clampitt, Associate Administrator for Management and Workplace Programs, General Services Administration. We are delighted to have you here. Welcome. I might add that we have a tradition here of swearing all witnesses, if you will rise and raise your right hand.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. HORN. Please be seated.

STATEMENT OF SUSAN CLAMPITT, ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND WORKPLACE PROGRAMS, GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, ACCOMPANIED BY LESLY P. WILSON, OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

Ms. CLAMPITT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue of child care and the work of the General Services Administration. My name is Susan Clampitt, and I am the Associate Administrator for the Office of Management and Workplace Programs. I respectfully request that my written remarks be added to the record.

Mr. HORN. Without objection, they are in the record at this point when we introduce the witness, and feel free to summarize it. We have all read it, so just summarize it.

Ms. CLAMPITT. The concern that we have is the same concern that is being felt nationwide, and that is balancing work life and family life, and being able to provide quality child care for the children of members of the Federal work force. Surveys show that 75 percent of families nationwide could use some help to meet the dependent care needs of their families.

At GSA, we have responded by having 109 child care centers in our public buildings across the country. Other centers, as you have said, in non-GSA centers number about 133. Child care has been a priority at GSA for a dozen years. We've earned a reputation for quality programs and concern for the safety and security of our children. In 1966, we had more than 7,100 children, a mix of Federal and non-Federal families, cared for in GSA buildings.

When I arrived at GSA last summer, I started to tour the country to our various regions. In the last 5 months, I have visited 6 regions and probably 20 or so centers. I'm very happy to report that the overall quality of our centers is excellent. They are in GSA-controlled space, and they are all operated by private nonprofit or commercial organizations under terms of leasing agreements which set standards to ensure quality.

As with all child care programs, there are degrees of quality. I recently visited a center in Seattle which was an oasis of care and compassion. It's what we would all like for our own children. The conditions that were there, was a very, very strong and active board, and there was a very well-trained staff that was committed to best practices and quality curriculum. It's our hope that we will be able to have that standard for child care centers across Government.

Last year GSA commissioned a study on accessibility and affordability. There were several findings: One, that the system needs more adequate funding; that child care needs better information and more cohesion; that agencies need some more flexibility to pursue funding and partnership initiatives; and also that there's no silver bullet that's going to solve this problem.

We do believe that the legislation pending before Congress, H.R. 2982, the Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act, and the amendments to the Trible legislation are important steps. They will bring more accountability to Federal child care government-wide.

All centers would be required to adhere to a uniform set of regulations which would be developed by GSA with the assistance of other agencies and representatives of the judicial and legislative branches. These will help to set the safety, health, and facility standards and require centers to meet standards for State and local licensing and national accreditation. This would apply to agencies that have 8 or fewer centers, would be under GSA oversight.

The proposed amendments to the Trible legislation would allow more flexible use of resources in supporting Government-sponsored child care. The proposed language broadens the definition of Federal employees' children to include children who are in the custody of Federal employees such as grandparents, legal guardians, aunts or uncles, as well as onsite Government contractors. It would allow GSA to partner with private centers and reserve spaces for Federal employees' children in non-Government child care centers when it's more cost effective to do that.

But perhaps most important is the flexibility that would be allowed under such an amendment. It would allow for some pilot and demonstration projects that might include partnerships with the private sector or maybe even the Department of Defense or partnerships for after-school programs. This may also have an impact on affordability. We are going to have an interagency child care council which will be able to address issues governmentwide.

We have always been studying the best practices in the country. Yesterday, for example, we met with the members of the Department of Defense to review their child care program. We do feel that the flexibility in partnerships will help. We believe that strengthening our local boards would help. We're sure that this committee will help. Thank you. I would be happy to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Clampitt follows:]

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ms. Ranking Member and Members of the Committee for this opportunity to testify on the issue of child care and the work of the General Services Administration. My name is Susan Clampitt, and I am the Associate Administrator for the Office of Management and Workplace Programs. As manager of a program that affects all of government, I understand the seriousness and importance of the role of this Committee. I welcome the chance to appear before you and continue our conversation on the Federal Child Care program.

I request that my written remarks be added to the record.

At this transformational moment in our society, when the way we work and care for our families evolves into an ever-trickier balancing act, the issue of affordable, quality child care confronts us all. Parents with young children struggle with what's best for their family, their jobs and budgets. All of us are stakeholders in that decision, for the choices made today have a profound ripple effect on us all, today and in the years ahead, when those children grow up and replace us.

Federal workers walk that same tightrope as the rest of society. A 1992 study showed that about one-quarter of all Federal workers had children under the age of six for whom they were responsible and who needed care at some time during the work day. That same survey said that 75 percent of those people could use assistance to help meet their families' dependent care needs. That's a lot of children.

Federal agencies have responded to that need in a number of ways. GSA oversees 109 centers in its public buildings across the country. As you know, the Department of Defense has an extensive child care program that they operate for military families, funded in part through appropriations. Other Federal agencies, not including GSA, sponsor a total of 133 centers.

Today, I want to discuss generally GSA's child care program and talk about the two critical issues we face – quality and affordability, and to give you my thoughts on the pending legislation that we believe strengthens the ability of the Federal government to provide affordable, quality child care for its employees.

Child care has been a big priority at GSA for a dozen years. In that time, we have earned a reputation for quality programs and concern for the safety and security of the children. In 1996, more than 7,100 children – a mix of Federal and non-Federal families – were cared for in GSA buildings. Since coming to GSA last summer, I have made it part of my mission to go out and visit some of those centers and see firsthand the care those children receive.

I am pleased to report that the overall quality of child care in GSA-sponsored centers is equal to, and often, better than other privately-run child care facilities. The centers in GSA-controlled space are all operated by private non-profit or commercial organizations under the terms of licensing agreements which set standards designed to ensure quality. Because of this authority to set standards, we know these children in GSA-controlled spaces are safe and well cared for.

As with any child care program as extensive as the one GSA sponsors, there are differences of degrees in quality. One downtown center that I visited in Seattle last month, for example, was an oasis of care and compassion. Of course, that center had a strong and active board and a staff committed to quality curriculum and best practices. Part of our job in the years ahead is to raise the bar for all of our centers.

Each of GSA's 109 centers is operated independently, either by a large or small provider, for profit or not-for-profit, locally-run or as part of a national chain. Some of the centers have established boards, made up primarily of parents, who enter into contracts with the child care provider to maintain a degree of responsibility and oversight for the care of their children. These boards are also instrumental in local fundraising, which is used for curriculum enrichment and tuition assistance.

GSA, parents, providers, Congress and the Administration have been concerned for some time about affordability issues. Last year Congress directed the Office of Management & Budget to report on that topic, and OMB requested that we investigate. GSA commissioned a study through the National Academy of Public Administration on "Accessibility & Affordability in Federal Child Care" which addresses those issues.

Key findings of the study were:

- The Federal child care system needs more adequate funding.

- Federal child care needs better information and more cohesion.
- Agencies may need more flexibility to pursue new funding and partnership initiatives.
- There is no "silver bullet" that will solve the affordability problem.

How do we go about addressing consistency in quality and affordability? We believe that the legislation pending before Congress, H.R. 2982, the Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act, and the Administration's proposed amendments to the Trible Amendment, are important steps.

H.R. 2982 will help bring more accountability to Federal child care. All Federal child care centers would be required to adhere to a uniform set of regulations which will be developed by GSA with the assistance of other agencies and representatives of the Judicial and Legislative branches. These regulations would help set national health, safety and facility standards and require that centers meet the standards for state/local licensing and national accreditation.

While agencies which sponsor eight or more child care centers would be delegated responsibility for compliance with the law, child care centers at other Federal, non-DOD agencies which sponsor fewer than eight would come under GSA oversight.

The legislation also sets up an interagency council to coordinate policy and share best practices. This council will give more cohesion to the Federal efforts, and a draft charter has already been developed.

The Administration's proposed amendments to the Trible Amendment would allow more flexible use of resources in supporting government-sponsored child care centers.

It modifies the 50 percent rule for Federal family enrollment from center by center to a national average, yet children of Federal workers would still have priority.

The proposed language broadens the definition of Federal employee children to include all children in the custody of federal employees, such as grandparents and legal guardians, as well as on-site government contractors.

It will allow us to partner with private centers to reserve spaces for Federal employee children in non-government child care centers when it is more cost effective to do so.

Perhaps most importantly, the legislation allows for some experimentation. Pilot tests and demonstration projects are authorized and encouraged, including those with the private sector. This flexibility for innovation may well prove the most important part of the package. Such innovation will need to have some evaluation component, in order for us to determine what works and what does not.

The Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act and its amendments are part of the strategy to make quality child care affordable for the Federal worker. We have asked all of our eligible centers to apply for participation in the Combined

Federal Campaign, and that will help address the problem. The Interagency Child Care Council will help. The lessons learned from the Department of Defense and the Department of Labor's apprenticeship program for child care workers will help. Flexibility for pilot partnerships will help. Strong local boards at our centers will help. And I know this Committee will help, and I thank you for this opportunity.

Mr. HORN. Thank you very much. You mentioned the standards. As you know, they vary from State to State. What are the plans of the General Services Administration in terms of developing a national standard to which the various child development, child care, however you want to call them, centers that are paid for or in Federal buildings, how would you develop those standards? Have you already developed them? If so, what States did you draw on? Some States are obviously a little more progressive than others.

Ms. CLAMPITT. We have pursued best practices. Right now, all of our centers in Federal buildings meet State and local licensing requirements. There are some jurisdictions where State or local licensing authorities will not go into Federal buildings or Federal compounds. But in those cases we require that the requirements for licensing be met. We also require accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, which is a national nongovernmental organization known for its accreditation and standards of quality.

Mr. HORN. Do you believe that we should abide by State standards when we have a Federal facility in a particular State?

Ms. CLAMPITT. As you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, the State regulations vary from State to State. Certainly it's another form of oversight. If there are requirements for safety and for ratio of child to care giver, it's another way to make sure that there's quality.

Mr. HORN. Yes, but who is going to have the staff to go around and look at these centers as State governments do? Are we going to create a new staff to monitor GSA standards, which are based on, hopefully, best practices of the best States that are in this field?

Ms. CLAMPITT. At the moment what we have are child care coordinators in regions throughout the country who visit the centers in their regions on a very regular basis. The National Association for the Education of Young Children visits in relation to accreditation. We have outside contractors that are hired to make biannual visits to look at the centers. We have GSA building supervisors who look at the safety standards. There are health standards, and there are health visits that take place as well. So there are multiple approaches.

Mr. HORN. Will the aim be to get accreditation for all the centers or just a certain percentage, or what?

Ms. CLAMPITT. All the centers that are eligible. By eligibility, we mean that the National Association for the Education of Young Children requires, for example, that a center be in existence for a period of time before it apply for accreditation. Then it has to go through a self-study, and that takes time.

Mr. HORN. What are the dues to that organization, to get accredited?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The dues?

Mr. HORN. Right.

Ms. CLAMPITT. It has to meet certain health and safety standards, ratio of adult to child. The sizes for the different age groups have to meet the appropriate standards, the space, and basically the program.

Mr. HORN. I think we need to find out how many are now accredited, since GSA doesn't have jurisdiction over them. I mean, look at the Department of Defense situation.

Ms. CLAMPITT. The Department of Defense accreditation is about 76 percent. GSA to date is 69 percent of eligible centers. And governmentwide the non-DOD/GSA centers is about 24 percent.

Mr. HORN. In other words, Agriculture and other ones, they are lower?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes.

Mr. HORN. To what is that attributed?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I really can't say, Mr. Chairman. I haven't visited those centers.

Mr. HORN. It sounds like if they haven't been accredited, it is probably because no leadership was taken at the top of whoever controls or coordinates or encourages or persuades to have child development centers in that area.

Mrs. Maloney, the ranking minority member, is here, and we are delighted to have her. If she has an opening statement, feel free to either read it aloud, or we will put it in the record as if read if you wish, whatever your pleasure is.

Mrs. MALONEY. Why don't you just put it in the record as read.

Mr. HORN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Carolyn B. Maloney follows:]

Statement of the Hon. Rep. Carolyn Maloney
Hearing on H.R. 2982, the "Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act"

February 11, 1998

As vice-chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, and as a working mother myself, the issue of child care is near and dear to my heart.

In fact, I was the first New York City Council member to give birth while in office. In 1987, as a member of the City Council, I introduced and passed the city's first comprehensive child care bill, called the Virginia Bill, after my daughter.

Child care remains part of America's unfinished business. We know the average family is spending more hours a week at work than 25 years ago.

We also know that most of America's parents are working -- either by choice or by necessity.

More importantly, the majority of women are working -- in 1970 30% of married mothers were in the work force. In 1994 it was 62%.

Millions of Americans, struggling to be both good parents and good workers, rely on child care and after-school programs for part of each day.

Today, over half the infants in this country are in day care, and millions more school-age children have both or their only parent in the work force. For many of those parents it is a constant struggle to find the child care they need.

They hobble together relative care, family day care, and center day care. And then, as their children get older, they have to worry about after-school care.

In fact, nearly 5 million school-age children spend their after school time without adult supervision.

Nothing weighs more heavily on a parent's mind than the well-being of a child in the care of others. It is an unfortunate fact that the conflict between the demands of the workplace and the responsibility of good parenting has become an everyday part of American family life.

This is as true for federal employees as it is for the general population, which is why I am favorably disposed to the legislation we are considering today.

This legislation addresses a serious deficiency in the operation of federal day care centers -- the fact that they currently operate without any licencing or accreditation standards.

This is clearly a situation which should not continue, and I commend Rep. Gilman for addressing the issue.

H.R. 2982 would require day care facilities operated by the federal government to comply with appropriate State and local licencing requirements.

It would also require the Administrator of GSA to establish and enforce health and safety standards in compliance with standards issued by a nationally recognized accreditation organization.

The legislative and judicial branches would be required to establish similar standards. These are simple, basic protections which should have been in place long ago.

In keeping with the focus on early childhood development, I am also interested in the issue of breastfeeding and the experiences of new mothers who return to work after giving birth.

Because many child care facilities are located in federal buildings, a woman who returns to work and wishes to continue breastfeeding may be able to go directly to her child at an on-site day care facility and breastfeed, thus making for a healthier mother and a healthier -- and perhaps smarter -- baby.

All of the studies coming out now point to a lower risk of breast cancer, cervical cancer, and osteoporosis for the mother, and decreased incidences of juvenile diabetes, infant mortality, meningitis, cancer, respiratory illness, bacterial and viral infections, diarrhoeal diseases, ear infections, allergies, and developmental delays for the child.

In addition to day care facilities, many agencies -- and many private companies around the nation -- are also setting up lactation rooms, for nursing mothers to pump milk which is then brought home to the child.

I am interested in exploring how we can better facilitate these lactation rooms in federal facilities.

President Clinton believes the government is supposed to give people the tools to enable them to raise their children and successfully participate in the workplace.

Since the day he and Vice President Gore took office, they have had an unshakable commitment to making the toughest job in the world -- being a parent -- easier for working Americans.

The President's recently announced child care initiative is the single largest national commitment to child care in this nation's history.

I believe we must do more to help working Americans succeed in their dual responsibilities as parents and workers, and I have introduced several bills which will provide much needed support to working families.

Unfortunately, they do not fall within the jurisdiction of this Committee. The legislation before us today corrects significant problems with the federal government's day care system, but we must do more.

The issue of child care touches almost every family, and its importance must rise above politics and partisan interests.

As a nation, we have not done our best to enable all working parents to meet the unique challenges of raising a family in today's society.

Mrs. MALONEY. I just feel that child care is absolutely essential. I think the President came forward with one of the most far-reaching national statements and commitments to child care in many a year. It really remains as part of America's unfinished business. We know the average family is spending more hours a week at work than 25 years ago.

I must say it is very near and dear to my heart. I was the first city council member to give birth while in office, exactly an hour after a meeting, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HORN. An hour after being sworn in or a meeting?

Mrs. MALONEY. A meeting at city hall.

Mr. HORN. I think we would all give birth if it was a New York City Council meeting.

Mrs. MALONEY. I offered a series of bills called the Virginia plan, named after my daughter Virginia, to make child care more affordable and available. I remember at that time the Federal plaza at 26 Federal Plaza had just opened a day care center which was really new and wonderful. They still have it.

But I think the Federal Government has certainly led the way in providing child care for working mothers and fathers. It certainly has changed in my lifetime from the time I was a staffer, there was no day care, to now many offices, Federal offices provide that. I think that is something all of us can be very proud of.

I have a series of questions. Why should GSA be taking the lead on Federal child care? Why should GSA be the agency? As he just mentioned, you have not had oversight in the past.

Ms. CLAMPITT. GSA has been in the child care business now for about 13 years. We are known for our quality centers. We are experienced. We have 109 child care centers in GSA-owned or leased space. It's just that we've been doing it for a while and we've been doing it very well.

Mrs. MALONEY. What are the average rates that parents pay in our child care centers, and are there waiting lists now?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The average rate for an infant, and this is a nationwide average, is $6,700 a year. In Washington, DC, in San Francisco, in New York, it can be $10,000 a year for an infant. For a preschooler——

Mr. HORN. Excuse me, but how does that translate into hours? Because most people are leaving their children there based on the hours.

Ms. CLAMPITT. That would be based on a full day.

Mr. HORN. So it is an 8-hour day, essentially?

Mrs. MALONEY. Nine to five?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Or longer than that. Usually. For a preschooler, it would be $5,700 nationwide. It could be as high as $8,300.

Mrs. MALONEY. How will this legislation improve the quality of child care for Federal employees?

As I understand it, correct me if I am wrong, the Federal day care centers are open to the public, too. If you do not fill up all your slots, they are open to the public. Because what we want to do is certainly make child care more affordable and accessible to all people, but this is particularly slated for Federal employees.

How will this legislation improve the quality of child care? And how will it make it more accessible and possibly affordable to Federal workers? And the general public after the Federal workers?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The GSA track record for quality has been quite high. As I went through the accreditation figures of 69 percent of eligible centers for GSA versus 24 percent for non-GSA, non-DOD Federal centers, what happened would be that the quality would be uniform because the standards would be uniform.

Mrs. MALONEY. But it would just really basically create uniform standards, it would not make it more accessible or more affordable, this legislation?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The affordability is a major, major issue. The proposed amendments to the Trible legislation which would permit public-private partnerships a little bit, to do some demonstration projects, might be able to address the affordability question.

Mrs. MALONEY. And your legislation does provide for pilot demonstration projects. And would you elaborate, what kind of pilot demonstration projects would you have in mind?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Right now we are having discussions with the Marriott Corp., that created a child care and family center in Atlanta for low-income wage earners. They would like to do the same thing in Washington. They are trying to put together a public-private partnership with the District of Columbia, with GSA, and with other corporations. Part of the arrangement would be for Marriott to raise the money for tuition assistance. In Atlanta they have been so successful that on a sliding scale, the lowest end of the sliding scale for infants in Atlanta is $7 a week.

Mrs. MALONEY. How many pilot demonstration projects do you think you will have? Is it just unestimated?

Ms. CLAMPITT. It's hard to say at this moment.

Mrs. MALONEY. How many would come forward? As you know, recently over the break there was a study that came out from the American Academy of Pediatrics and also really from the country of New Zealand stating that breast feeding not only was nutritionally better for our young people but literally made them smarter.

So with two national studies saying that breast feeding should be supported with our mothers, I would like to know, what have we done for lactation rooms in the Federal Government? And do you think we should have lactation rooms as part of the child care facilities so that women could go to work? They are calling for a year's commitment. That is a long time. I wondered if you had thought about incorporating lactation rooms in your proposal.

Ms. CLAMPITT. Right now in our GSA-designed guidelines for centers, we have lactation areas. They're not separate rooms but they're semiprivate, they're out of traffic patterns and they're out of the main activity area of the center, with comfortable rocking chairs and comfortable chairs. They're not separate rooms. They're often very close to the sleeping areas so children can be put into their cribs after breast feeding.

Mrs. MALONEY. How successful would you say these programs have been in terms of productivity, morale and employee retention rates of new mothers in the Federal workplace?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Every center that I have visited with an infant program, I believe that I have seen a mother breast feeding. So I

know that they're there, that that's happening. I am told that there are lactation facilities in some Federal agencies on an experimental basis for mothers who bring their babies to work with them.

Mrs. MALONEY. And what about new child care facilities that are being built? Do you think we should have lactation rooms in them?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Certainly there should be facilities, in my opinion. If there can be lactation rooms, I think we'd have to work out the cost, whether there would be space available. If there's a lactation room, would that interfere with play space or other kinds of space? But I think that it's something that needs to be looked at very seriously.

Mrs. MALONEY. The bill before us, Mr. Chairman, H.R. 2982, includes a provision to create an interagency council with a mission to facilitate, and I'm quoting from the legislation, "cooperation and sharing of best practices and to develop and coordinate policy, regarding the provision of child care in the Federal Government."

Can you tell me whether the people who will be involved with the council are the same people who would also be knowledgeable about lactation support and nursing mothers' rooms in these Federal agencies?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The members of that council would be the people who are most involved in child care facilities of their agencies.

Mrs. MALONEY. If Congress were to decide to coordinate an effort to identify the best practices in lactation in addition to day care, would this group, the council that you are attempting to formulate, be an appropriate group to accomplish this, do you think?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I think it might very well be.

Mrs. MALONEY. My time is up, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HORN. I thank the gentlewoman.

Let me pursue some of the questions where we were. I would like GSA to give us at this point in the record, simply for filing it for the record, an idea of the regional cost differences in the United States. Because California is one thing, New York is one thing, but when you get to Georgia and Florida, I would like to know generally what are the charges that are levied in the ones under GSA control. If without a lot of trouble you can also get a few Defense figures, I wouldn't be hurt by that.

Ms. CLAMPITT. I do have the Defense figures right here.

Mr. HORN. Why don't we put them in the record at this point. Staff will xerox them before they go to the record so we can look at them before tomorrow morning.

[The information referred to follows:]

FAMILY CHILD CARE (FCC)

All costs for the administration, oversight and training of FCC providers are paid with government appropriated funds. These funds also provide resource materials, supplies, and safety equipment, and are available through FCC lending libraries.

In most cases, FCC Providers are private contractors and negotiate fees directly with parents. The Military Child Care Act (MCCA) of 1989 authorized the use of appropriated funds to directly subsidize FCC providers so that care in the FCC home could be provided at a cost comparable to care in centers. The use of this authority varies widely, however, when providers do receive direct cash subsidies, the installation commander may impose restrictions on the amount the provider can charge. In these cases, the fees the providers charge are comparable to fees in the Child Development Center.

At some installations, it is difficult to meet the need for child care, especially for infants and toddlers. Commanders can use direct cash subsidies as an incentive to expand child care services and keep fees affordable for young families. See the DoD pamphlet "Family Child Care" for more information on subsidies to FCC Providers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR QUALITY

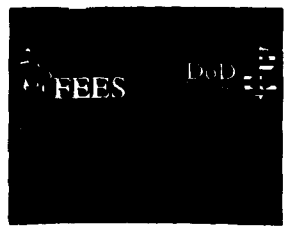
Funding has a direct impact on the quality of programs and the outcomes for children. DoD is committed to adequate funding for the Child Development Program. This funding allows all of the child care programs to provide stimulating, appropriately equipped environments staffed with trained personnel. Dedicated funding ensures safe and healthy facilities, appropriate staff-to-child ratios, highly trained caregiving staff that view child care as a profession, skilled administrators, and adequate supplies and equipment.

For more information contact:

Department of Defense
Office of Family Policy
4015 Wilson Blvd, Suite 917
Arlington, VA 22203-5190
1 • 888 • CDP • 3040

THE MILITARY CHILD DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN CHILD CARE



FUNDING, FEES, AND QUALITY

Department of Defense

FUNDING, FEES, AND QUALITY

QUALITY AND AFFORDABILITY

In a recent study published by the University of Colorado at Denver, the relationship between the cost and quality of child care provided in centers was examined. The study demonstrates that cost is directly related to the quality of child care. The study notes a gap between what parents can afford to pay for care and the cost of quality care. The Department of Defense (DoD) experience supports the study findings that sufficient funding is essential to quality child care. The Defense Department uses government funds provided by Congress (appropriated funds) to reduce the cost of child care for military parents while improving the quality.

This government funding goes directly to the Military Child Development Program through three major components: Child Development Centers, Family Child Care (FCC), and School-Age Care (SAC) programs. Appropriated funds are budgeted annually at the military installation level. All parents in military Child Development Programs pay for child care, however, the amount they pay varies depending on the component.

All DoD (government) funds are provided directly to the program in the form of program subsidies and are used to pay for salaries, supplies, equipment, and training costs. This varies from other Federal funds, such as the Child Care Block Grant funds which usually go from states directly to the parents in the form of vouchers.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

DoD policy requires the military services to match the total amount of funds raised from parent fees with government funds. This policy applies to Child Development Centers only and is referred to as the "50/50" match. These government funds cover the administration, Training Specialists' salaries and associated training costs, equipment, supplies, food service, and the maintenance and utility costs of the centers. As previously stated, the government funds are provided directly to the program not the parents.

The fees charged to Military Child Development Center users are based on their total family income. DoD publishes child care fee ranges each year for all military centers. The local Commanders set the installation fees within the ranges. Parents on the low end of the scale pay approximately one-third of the total cost of care, while parents on the high end pay approximately two-thirds.

During 1996, the average fee paid by military center users was $65 per week. The fee usually includes up to 11 hours of care per week and Department of Agriculture approved meals (breakfast, lunch, and two snacks). The income collected from parent fees is used to pay the wages of caregivers who work directly with children.

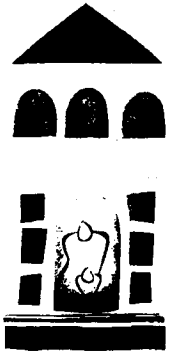
DoD FEE POLICY FOR SCHOOL YEAR 1997-98

Category	Family Income	Weekly Fee Range
I	$0-23,000	$37-50
II	$23,001-34,000	$47-60
III	$34,001-44,000	$57-72
IV	$44,001-55,000	$70-82
V	$55,000+	$83-94

SCHOOL-AGE CARE (SAC)

Like the Child Development Centers, the School-Age Care Program is funded with a mix of parent fees and government appropriated funds. A sliding scale fee policy based on total family income will be implemented in 1998.

FUNDING IS ESSENTIAL FOR QUALITY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS



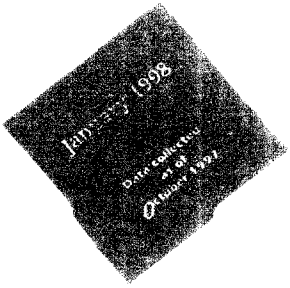
"Children's faces looking up holding wonder like a cup"

–Sara Teasdale

Annual Profile of Child Care Centers in GSA Space

U.S. General Services Administration

Public Buildings Service



GSA's Child Care Program: Serving Federal Employee Families Nationwide

GSA's Child Care Program allows families of Federal employees to receive quality child care in centers located in GSA-managed space throughout the United States.

GSA works in partnership with Federal agencies and boards of directors to select high quality child care providers. We strive to take advantage of the best available child care resources within each local community. Overall program guidance and standards are prioritized in formal licensing agreements.

Title 40 of the United States Code, Section 490b, as amended, gives Federal agencies the authority to establish child care centers for Federal families without charge for rent or services. The Code, known as the Trible Amendment, requires that at least 50% of the children enrolled in a center be children or dependents of Federal employees. The remaining enrollment may be open to the general public.

Managed by the Best in National and Local Providers

GSA oversees a network of private, market-based child care providers. This network, which consists of both for-profit and not-for-profit companies, includes nationally recognized providers as well as small independent organizations.

Growing t Meet Expand Demand

Currently, 109 child care centers operate in 31 states and the District of Columbia, including five which opened in 1997. In 1998, four new centers will open, and more are planned for the future. All facilities designed and renovated after 1992 reflect state-of-the-art child care designs and are built to promote child-oriented, developmentally appropriate, efficient and effective environments in accordance with the GSA Child Care Center Design Guide PBS-PQ 140.

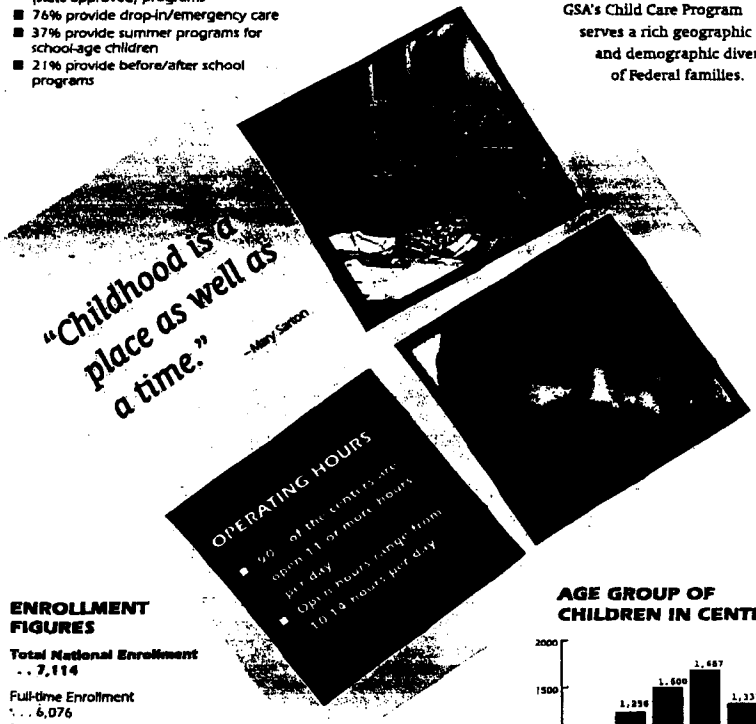
Reflecting Diverse Local Needs

PROGRAMS

Of the 109 centers operating nationally:

- 90% provide infant care
- 30% provide kindergarten (state-approved) programs
- 76% provide drop-in/emergency care
- 37% provide summer programs for school-age children
- 21% provide before/after school programs

Each community establishes priorities for its center within the quality guidelines set by GSA. As a result, GSA's Child Care Program serves a rich geographic and demographic diversity of Federal families.



ENROLLMENT FIGURES

Total National Enrollment
. . 7,114

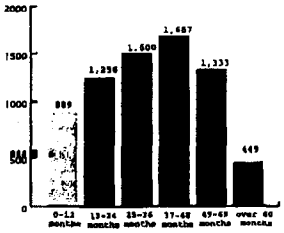
Full-time Enrollment
. . . 6,076

Part-time Enrollment
. . . 1,038

Enrollment from Federal families
. . . 3,994

Enrollment from Non-Federal families
. . . 3,120

AGE GROUP OF CHILDREN IN CENTERS



Providing Quality, Accredited Care

All centers operating in GSA managed space are required to achieve accreditation from the Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Health and safety, staffing, staff qualifications, physical environment and administration are all reviewed during accreditation. 69% of eligible centers currently are accredited.

STAFFING LEVELS AND EXPERIENCE

- Centers employ 1,462 full-time staff and 342 part-time staff (caregivers, administrators and support staff)
- 66% of Directors have 10 or more years in early childhood education
- 67% of Directors have 5 or more years of administrative experience

STAFF SALARIES

	RANGE	AVERAGE
Director	$15,000-$55,000	$31,121
Highest paid teacher salaries	$12,500-$45,080	$22,803
Entry-level teacher (with degree)	$10,920-$24,000	$17,220

STAFF BENEFITS

97% of centers provide paid vacation, 81% provide paid sick leave, and 96% offer health insurance. 75 centers contribute 50% or more of the employee's premium. 53% of centers offer a retirement plan.

STAFF TURNOVER

- Average number who left centers in the 12-month period: 6
- Annual turnover rate: 37%

OFFERING MARKET-DRIVEN, FEE-BASED CARE

Cost of care in GSA Child Care Centers is determined locally. Tuition rates vary according to geographical location, services offered, number of operating hours, size of center and other criteria. Federal agencies do not subsidize operating costs. Instead, parent fees are assessed.

TUITION DATA

AVERAGE TUITION PER WEEK:

	Federal	Non-Federal	Tuition Ranges
Infants	$147	153	$77-$266
Toddlers	$139	144	$74-266
2s	$125	130	$64-215
Pre-school	$112	116	$65-199
Kindergarten	$107	111	$45-176

TUITION ASSISTANCE

Because the cost of high quality care is not affordable for many families—even when the government provides space and equipment—tuition assistance is critical.

- 98% of the centers offer a tuition assistance program
- 1,771 families received some form of tuition assistance at some time between October 2, 1996, and September 30, 1997.
- Centers reported a total of $1,291,656 was distributed from a variety of sources—76% from Combined Federal Campaign/United Way contributions and the balance primarily from state funds, recycle funds or fundraising events run by the boards of directors.
- Grant money, used for training and special programs to enhance quality, also directly or indirectly affected the cost of care for parents.
- 68 centers received Combined Federal Campaign and/or United Way funds
- 12 centers received Federal Child Care Development Block Grants
- 10 centers received non-Federal grants
- 35 centers participated in the USDA Food Program

Future Directions

GSA centers are taking advantage of emerging community partnerships. Next year we look forward to reporting on a number of innovative partnerships, including alliances with public schools for kindergarten and school-age programs, consortia with local businesses and contracts with Project Headstart.

The GSA network of child care professionals continue their efforts to provide accessible, high-quality child care programs on behalf of Federal families.

"We must have a place where children can have a whole group of adults they can trust"

–Margaret Mead

U.S. General Services Administration
Child Care Operations Center of Expertise
26 Federal Plaza, Room 1709
New York, NY 10278
(212) 264-8321

Data Sources

Surveys were distributed to each center in GSA space in October 1997. The information provided by centers was in terms of their status as of October 1, 1997. Completion of the survey typically involves the center director, the provider and the board of directors.

The results of these surveys provide GSA and its client agencies with an updated analysis of center operations. The results are also used for legislative briefings and to provide policy makers with accurate information about GSA's Child Care Program.

Mr. HORN. One of the things I am interested in, and I think as I told you prior to the hearing, I guess one of the first things I did as a university president was get a child development center built on the campus. It is probably one of the finest in the country. A donor gave us a total of $1 million in order to build that center. They are even into infant toddlers now. Infant toddlers get to be very expensive under California law because you have to have one paid staff member with every four. Generally the center has been taking children that can walk and so forth, at 2½, 3, up to maybe 6 or whatever.

What is the infant toddler situation in terms of GSA centers?

Ms. CLAMPITT. GSA centers, we have a 1 to 4 ratio also, with a maximum of 8 children in a group.

Mr. HORN. In the very small infant group?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes. So it is 1 to 4 for infants, and age 1 to 2, it is 1 to 5 with a maximum of 10 children per group.

Mr. HORN. Do you have many of the infants in your system?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes. As a matter of fact, the waiting list for infant care is unbelievable, as it is nationwide.

Mr. HORN. I can believe it.

I am very strongly in support of such centers. I think, if possible, they ought to be accredited. I think what we need to work out is those best practices that are done in, let's start with California, where I know there are pretty solid practices. I am sure New York is somewhat like that. Mrs. Maloney can comment on that.

I think that is a worthy goal that any Federal facility be treated just as a nonprofit would be treated, in the sense that they have got to meet the best practices standards. My concern would be, do we have GSA people on your staff running around doing this, or do we permit the State health or county health, whatever it is, to implement the State standards? Our concern is that we have standards. It seems to me we shouldn't be duplicating the State effort if the State effort is effective. If it is just a fraud and a sham, that is another question.

I would appreciate any thoughts you have on that, where who administers the standards to make sure it is safe and to make sure that something good is happening there. That is why we call it a child development center, not a child care center, because their brains are being educated while they are there. I think that is very important.

Ms. CLAMPITT. We might want to change our language as well.

Mr. HORN. Well, you might. But you have got to do the learning activity things. It isn't just a custodial center, in other words, where Mama and Daddy can drop off Junior or the little girl and say, "Gee, see ya 8 hours from now." They are engaged in play activity, teamwork, and all the rest of it.

Ms. CLAMPITT. We are very proud of the curriculum and the quality of care and nurturing in our centers. As I mentioned to you earlier, I would be delighted to take you to visit a center or two.

Mr. HORN. Be glad to do it.

Let's see here. We have a few things just for the record here. Right now I don't know if you have had a chance to visit very many centers, since you are fairly new in the job. Can you give us a feel

for the quality of child care that we have for Federal employees? Have you visited, say, 10 or 20 centers?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I have visited about 20. I am very pleased to report that the standards are quite good. I'm very impressed with the quality of relationship between the care giver and the children. A lot of good activity going on. Large motor, small motor development. Art at child's height. Dramatic play. It's really quite impressive.

Mr. HORN. Have we had any cases where a child in one of the Federal centers has been kidnapped? That happens, I am sorry to say, in some programs. My question is obvious, as to the security by which personnel that sometimes change during the day know who is the legitimate parent to pick up the child. What are we doing on that?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. HORN. OK, so we haven't had any instances to your knowledge?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. HORN. Are these centers generally within a Federal building where there is a GSA protective force?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes, we have the protective service. And the entrance to every center has security so that parents have to key in or they have to be buzzed in. But nobody is let in the door without being recognized.

Mr. HORN. OK. Because there was a case the other day I read in the papers where the poor little kid was locked up all night and nobody——

Ms. CLAMPITT. In Virginia, yes.

Mr. HORN. It is just tragic. I think we need to take a look sometime, the staff should with you, and see what our security situation is there, because we have a responsibility. If we are going to be doing these good deeds, with good deeds comes responsibility. It will be the Federal Government's problem to explain itself. I don't want to see the executive branch have to explain itself to a parent where suddenly their children are gone. Anyhow, you are going to look at that as you go around.

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes, indeed.

Mr. HORN. It is a real problem because of the turnover of personnel in these centers. Students, if you are on a campus, the student will have a 2-hour shift today and another student is on a 3-hour shift and they all mean well and they are all in child development programs and everything else, but there can be slippage when somebody comes for the child and the child says, "Hi, I've got a cookie," off they go, and it wasn't their parents. Or it is the divorced parent that wants to steal the child. That has also happened. I don't want it to happen on Federal property.

Ms. CLAMPITT. When I was in my early, early life as a teacher, I had several of those experiences actually. Not very pleasant.

Mr. HORN. Yes. There was a recent requirement that child care center workers obtain background checks. GSA has been criticized by your Inspector General for not following this requirement. What is the present situation?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The requirement is being followed.

Mr. HORN. OK. In other words, the background check?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes.

Mr. HORN. I think that is very important when we are talking about letting loose sex molesters and everybody else here in some States, that we should do that check.

How will this legislation make child care more accessible and affordable? I mean, is there a building plan? Is there a requirement that every Federal facility have this? Is there a requirement that this be strictly in new Federal facilities? What is the GSA policy and thinking and practice on this?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Generally when a decision is made to open a new center, there's been some research done. That involves canvassing an agency for need, and also canvassing a neighborhood for available facilities. So we wouldn't start a center unless there was a genuine need for it. The difficulty, Mr. Chairman, is that only the top graded Federal workers can afford our child care because it's very, very expensive.

Mr. HORN. Now, sometimes a center will charge some people that can afford it, more to help subsidize some of the people that can't afford it. Is there a policy with regard to that?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes, our licensing agreement requires that there be local fund-raising for tuition assistance. That varies from center to center depending on how strong and active the board is.

Mr. HORN. Each of these centers has a board?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes. Most of them do.

Mr. HORN. Would you say, let's use the GS schedule, would you say a GS–11 and up should be able to pay more than a below GS–11? Or where would you cut it if you had a differential rate here based on salary of the parents?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I think it would depend on family income as well as number of dependents. There may be issues. For single parents it's a different story. I know that for a GS–1 to 3, it would cost more than 50 percent of gross annual income.

Mr. HORN. That is why I am saying, should there be a differential rate here? It sounds like we're cookie-cutting it regardless of income. I don't see anything wrong with varying the fee based on income.

Ms. CLAMPITT. That's what the centers try to do. That's why they try to do fund-raising, just for tuition assistance, just to meet that need.

Mr. HORN. One way to do the fund-raisings is to get those that can pay easier because they make more, maybe four or five times what a GS–1 to GS–3—GS–1 is hardly used but I have found a few places where there are 1's. Is that against present policy?

Ms. CLAMPITT. No, not at all.

Mr. HORN. So is that up to a center director, is it up to you to get a policy across all centers or what? How does it work?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The centers are locally run, mostly by nonprofit boards.

Mr. HORN. So they are 501(c)(3)'s under the tax laws?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes. And so the contract is between the nonprofit organization and the provider.

Mr. HORN. OK. So is the Federal Government responsible for what happens in that center? Or is the 501(c)(3) responsible?

Ms. CLAMPITT. When we license with a 501(c)(3), we set certain standards and regulations that have to be met. One of those is providing tuition assistance for families that need it.

Mr. HORN. Since the Federal Government has a lot of lawyers, do they also put in hold harmless clauses where if the moon hits the center or the sun hits the center or rain floods it and floats it out to the Pacific, they say, gee, we didn't have anything to do with it, look at our hold harmless clause, are those in those leases, too? Usually that is what I have seen when I deal with a city, county, or a State. I haven't dealt with the Federal Government lately. There is a GSA counsel, I hear, around.

Ms. WILSON. There is not a hold harmless clause.

Mr. HORN. No hold harmless clause?

Ms. WILSON. What there is——

Mr. HORN. Why don't we get you up to the microphone here. You know the law. I am going to swear you in, since you are going to testify. Raise your right hand.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. HORN. Identify yourself for the record.

Ms. WILSON. Hi. My name is Lesly Wilson, with the general counsel's office.

Mr. HORN. Tell us what the typical contract is.

Ms. WILSON. There is a standard form of the license agreement which is what we use to put any non-Federal agency in a Government building. There probably—I am trying to remember if there is in fact a type of indemnification clause in there but the license agreement—the standard form also says that whoever is occupying the space is subject to special conditions. The special conditions to the license agreement for a child care center does not have a hold harmless clause. It does require that if the private organization, the child care provider destroys Government property, that they will repair it. But other than that, there is no typical indemnification clause.

Mr. HORN. In your judgment as an attorney, if we had some tragedy happen in that center and there was a feeling that negligence had been involved by personnel in the center, to what degree is the Federal deep pockets liable to the typical tort lawyer in this society?

Ms. WILSON. I am sure that they would try to come against the Federal Government. But as far as we're concerned, the way the center operates is the responsibility of the provider. If there is some negligence that is caused by the Government in terms, for instance, if we know that there is a facilities problem, we know that there's broken glass and that is not repaired, then, yes, we would be subject to that liability.

Mr. HORN. Since you mentioned that, all of them are 501(c)(3) situations, are they? Or some are not?

Ms. WILSON. The board of directors usually—we request that they be 501(c)(3)'s for the simple reason that we ask them to be part of the Combined Federal Campaign. To be a CFC recipient, you have to have 501(c)(3) status. A lot of the providers that we have on board now are for-profit organizations. They would not qualify for that. Therefore, we would prefer there to be a board of directors and traditionally they would be 501(c)(3).

Mr. HORN. I think it is a good idea that they are part of the Federal Campaign. Do they do pretty well in having designated contributions from other Federal workers?

Ms. WILSON. I think we have a mixed record. Some of them market the fact that they are, at least advertise that they are 501(c)(3)'s very heavily, and they get a lot of support from agency employees. Some of them don't do as well. They are required to be part of it. I think there is a different——

Mr. HORN. How about Federal retirees who have various clubs? Have they been approached to sponsor scholarships for people that have lower salaries than most?

Ms. WILSON. I'm sure that different agencies have different policies. I know our GSA employee association does have scholarships available for various activities, some scholarships for its schools, some for emergencies, that kind of thing.

Mr. HORN. That is very helpful. They might want to think about the retired Federal employees, because they are very active in most communities and get together maybe monthly in meetings. They might be a group to approach for funding for that 501(c)(3).

Does the ranking member have any other questions?

Mrs. MALONEY. Yes. I would like to know, how do your rates compare to other child care facilities? In other words, are they comparable, lower, or higher than not just Federal child care facilities but like facilities in the community?

Ms. CLAMPITT. They are comparable to like facilities, yes.

Mrs. MALONEY. They are comparable?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes.

Mrs. MALONEY. As the chairman asked about having a sliding scale and you advised him back that you were trying to raise money with the business community, how much of the $8 million to $10 million does the GSA hope to raise through fund-raising, and have you developed an action plan for this fund-raising?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes. We are working with our centers, with the boards, in helping them to become better at fund-raising. Some of our centers receive money from State lottery funds. At GSA all of the rebate money that we get from recycling, we apply to our child care centers.

Mr. HORN. Excuse me. On the lottery funds, I am curious. How are you State eligible? Are they helping other child care centers?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I——

Mr. HORN. I think it is a great idea. I just hadn't heard it before.

Ms. CLAMPITT. I understand in the State of Georgia, because they are a 501(c)(3), they are able to accept those funds.

Mr. HORN. Very good.

Ms. CLAMPITT. There have been very innovative fund-raising initiatives. I know that there are some jewelry sales and there are some clothing sales that take place that have raised $30,000 and $40,000 in 1 day for some of the centers.

Mrs. MALONEY. Do you have any sense of how many, the number of Federal employees who need full-time child care services that are not served? Do you have any notion of that number?

Ms. CLAMPITT. We don't have data on that.

Mrs. MALONEY. And you don't have any data of how many children need full-time care and after school care?

Ms. CLAMPITT. What we have are waiting lists at our centers.

Mrs. MALONEY. Do you have any current plans for GSA or some other entity to do such an assessment or survey of how many people actually need child care across our Nation? If so, when could this information be made available?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I think that there may be that information nationwide. As far as the Government, we do survey periodically and we will get back to you about that.

Mrs. MALONEY. Which agencies are participating or have indicated that they will be participating in the newly chartered Interagency Child Care Council?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Most of the major—all of the major stakeholders. It would be Health and Human Services, the Department of Interior, Department of Justice, and some of the independent agencies, Social Security, OPM.

Mrs. MALONEY. Has the Child Care Council sought participation from Federal employees' unions? Have they been part of the decisionmaking?

Ms. CLAMPITT. We would like this council to be inclusive and that all the stakeholders be at the table.

Mrs. MALONEY. Would you elaborate on the Trible amendment?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The Trible amendment will offer more flexibility and will give authority for GSA centers to partner with the private sector to do some demonstration projects, to be a little more innovative, and to expand the definition of Federal employee to include children who live with relatives or others, and to include Government contractors. It also would expand the 50 percent rule to nationwide rather than center-by-center, because there are times when if an agency, for example, moves, it may decrease the Federal number in a center, and that number would have to be restored over time, so it gives a little bit more flexibility.

At this point we have about 61 percent Federal children in our centers nationwide. It would also allow GSA to reserve spaces in non-Government centers if that would be more cost effective and more efficient, instead of going through the expense of creating a center when we may not have as great a need.

Mrs. MALONEY. I would like to reassure all Federal employees that these changes would not in any way disturb the priority provided for their children. Could you explain or elaborate how the proposed changes in the 50 percent rule would work? Basically it is that they could go to outside if it is competitive. Is that the only change in the 50 percent rule?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The 50 percent rule is that it won't be 50 percent center-by-center. It would be 50 percent governmentwide.

Mrs. MALONEY. But would Federal employees still be given first priority?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Absolutely.

Mrs. MALONEY. What type of in-kind assistance do you propose to provide these child care facilities, GSA?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Right now we provide space, we provide equipment, durable goods, utilities, appliances, security systems, and telephone.

Mrs. MALONEY. That is quite a bit. Do you have any estimate of the aggregate annual value of in-kind assistance to these facilities?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I don't, but would be happy to get that to you.

Mrs. MALONEY. I have two friendly amendments. I know this is not the time to offer them, but I just wanted to put them out here in case you would like to comment on them.

One of them would really add, after "child care," the language "including rooms for nursing mothers and other lactation support facilities and services." This is really to support the American Academy of Pediatrics statement that breast feeding is not only nutritionally better for our children but literally makes them smarter, and that if we are going to be making changes, that we should include in that mission statement providing lactation rooms. I would like your comment on whether or not you would support that, GSA, or how you feel about it.

Ms. CLAMPITT. In theory, definitely yes. I think that we would need to see what impact that would have in terms of space, in terms of cost. We do have lactation areas right now. They're not separate rooms. But I do think that's something that should be studied very seriously.

Mrs. MALONEY. I think, Mr. Chairman, maybe we could do one of our joint surveys that we have done to really see what the Federal Government is now providing for nursing mothers already. I know that some agencies do. A number of women have contacted me with very positive experiences, some with very negative experiences of being discriminated against, actually being fired for having breast fed their children.

I would also want to put in at the end of the bill a statement I would like to read to you and hear your comments back, and I hope that this will be a friendly amendment. We have submitted it to Mr. Gilman and to the chairman here:

> The head of each agency shall require that each child care center first operated after the 1-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this act by the Federal agency or under a contract or licensing agreement with the Federal agency shall provide reasonable accommodations for the needs of breast fed infants and their mothers, including by providing a lactation facility or a room for nursing mothers as part of the operating plan for the center.

This is flexible. It could be, as you said, just an area in the day care center where they could breast feed. I am just wondering if that is something GSA could support. We will give you copies of it.

Ms. CLAMPITT. I think we would really like to explore it.

Mrs. MALONEY. If you could, and get back to us, because I think the chairman wants to move quickly on these.

Mr. HORN. Tomorrow morning we will mark this bill up.

Mrs. MALONEY. I would like your feedback on it. I think that we have to be accommodating to the times. I applaud GSA. Just the last break I went and toured the GSA day care center in the district that I represent, 26 Federal Plaza. They have done a magnificent job.

Ms. CLAMPITT. It is a new center.

Mrs. MALONEY. You really have done a magnificent job. You have been a real leader, a trailblazer in providing accommodations and support for working mothers and fathers.

I hope that you will support my two amendments because it is responding to the desire of many mothers to breast feed. We should as a Government, as individuals, support their options to be the

best mothers they possibly can be. Now, with national studies coming forward and saying that it is important, they certainly should not be discriminated against. They should certainly be supported in their efforts.

If you could get back to the chairman's staff, I would appreciate it, and myself.

Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions at this time.

Mr. HORN. Do we have any further questions on this side? We do not. You have done a very fine job. Is this your first congressional appearance?

Ms. CLAMPITT. No, it isn't. But on child care it is.

Mr. HORN. OK. We are glad to have you come up here. If you could get us some of the answers in the morning, why, we would appreciate it. Mr. Brasher is the one you want to talk to on the majority staff.

Mrs. MALONEY. Could I just ask one last question: How many GSA centers or federally sponsored centers are there in the country now, do you think?

Ms. CLAMPITT. 109.

Mrs. MALONEY. 109 in the country. That is really remarkable. I think this is a good bill and I would like to be added as cosponsor to it. Why do you think this has not come forward before with standards for Federal day care centers?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I really can't answer that. I am told that it was precipitated by some child abuse that might have taken place in a non-GSA Federal center. That was the impetus for the creation of this.

Mrs. MALONEY. And you support the legislation?

Ms. CLAMPITT. I do indeed, yes.

Mrs. MALONEY. You think it will be an improvement?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Absolutely.

Mrs. MALONEY. As I understand it, it won't be a central standard but each Federal center in a State will adhere to the State standards. Is that correct?

Ms. CLAMPITT. As well as accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, which is an accrediting body.

Mr. HORN. Try to give us an answer we can put in the record at this point as to what it costs to be a member. Usually, I mean, there are dues to be paid. I remember I had at least 60 organizations on the campus, maybe 100, that we paid dues to, many for accreditation.

We would like to know what the cost is going to be, who is going to bear that. Is that the board that is running it? They are going to have to sell cookies and raise the money, just as they do for a scholarship?

Ms. CLAMPITT. The agencies pay for that now.

Mr. HORN. The agency will pay for it?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes, in GSA centers. And GSA helps with the preparation for the accreditation.

Mr. HORN. Would that be true of other Federal agencies? Have you talked to them on this subject?

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes.

Mr. HORN. And they are willing to pay it? Or do they need a special budget allotment? You throw out that little hook, pretty soon they start taking it. Apparently they have the authority to use the money, that is all I am concerned about.

Ms. CLAMPITT. Yes, they do.

Mr. HORN. That is great.

There are no more questions. With that, this hearing is adjourned. Recessed, I am sorry. It is recessed until tomorrow morning.

Let me thank the staff that have worked on this part. There might be some other people doing it tomorrow morning. J. Russell George, staff director, chief counsel; Mark Brasher, senior policy director; John Hynes, professional staff member; Matthew Ebert, clerk; David Coher, an intern with us; Mark Stephenson, professional staff member for the minority; Ellen Rayner, the minority chief clerk; and the court reporters are Bill Odom and Debbie Walker.

We will recess until 9:30 tomorrow. That is Thursday, February 12. The hearing will resume in room 2154. For those that are interested in attending the rest of the hearing, the witness will be the sponsor of the bill, Mr. Gilman. Then we will move to a markup probably after his testimony, and mark it up and report it to the full committee.

With that, we are recessed.

[Whereupon, at 2:55 p.m., the subcommittee recessed, to reconvene at 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, February 12, 1998.]

H.R. 2982, QUALITY CHILD CARE FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ACT

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1998

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT,
INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Stephen Horn (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Horn, Sununu, and Maloney.

Staff present: J. Russell George, staff director and chief counsel; William Moschella, deputy counsel and parliamentarian; Mark Brasher, senior policy director; and Matthew Ebert, clerk.

Mr. HORN. The Subcommittee on Government Management, Information, and Technology has been in recess since yesterday's hearing. A quorum was established then.

We're delighted to have one of the senior members of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee, the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on International Relations, who is an expert on everything, including telecommunications, and now he's an expert on child care. Everybody is impressed with your bill, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN, REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Mr. GILMAN. That's a rare premise, Mr. Chairman, but thank you and your subcommittee for allowing me to come before you to provide some thoughts regarding this important piece of legislation, H.R. 2982, the Quality Child Care for Federal Employees Act, which will improve the quality of Federal child care facilities throughout the Nation. I want to thank you, Chairman Horn, for bringing this bill before your subcommittee at this early date in our new session.

I was first introduced to the horrors of inadequate day care by former constituents Mark and Julie Fiedelholtz of Pembrook Pines, FL. Mr. Fiedelholtz asked for my help after the tragic death of his 3-month-old son Jeremy.

He had left Jeremy at a day care center for merely 2 hours. Little Jeremy died as a result of deplorable conditions at that day care center, unqualified personnel, and a blatant lack of respect for the laws intended to protect the children in their care.

Although this horrifying situation didn't take place in a Federal center, clean, safe, and quality conditions for our children need to be ensured in every child care center throughout our Nation, whether it be Federal or private.

Because many of these child care facilities are housed in Federal buildings, State and local authorities have little or no jurisdiction regarding the health, fire, and safety codes for those centers.

My bill H.R. 2982—and I'm pleased we have a number of cosponsors—would require all Federal centers responsible for maintaining basic regulations. There are over 1,000 federally owned or operated child care centers throughout the country capable of accommodating 200,000 children. Therefore, this legislation is essential if we're concerned about protecting those children.

After conferring with representatives from Federal agencies, I learned that many Federal centers, such as the GSA facilities, follow their own standards, which in many instances are much higher than most of the State standards.

I do want to stress it is not the intention of this bill to lower any Federal agency standards should they be greater than the States or local regulations. Instead, we are looking to raise the standards of those Federal centers across the country whose standards fall below State and local codes and hold them accountable for any failure to do so.

Moreover, I want to clear up any confusion that exists with H.R. 2982, which does not allow States to enter Federal facilities to perform checks of any kind unless GSA agrees to it. This option is left up to the discretion of GSA, and it's not mandated in the bill.

I've been informed that our good subcommittee chairman, Mr. Horn, intends to offer an amendment to my bill on my behalf which will help GSA in its quest to provide a more comprehensive day care plan. That amendment will allow GSA to expand its child care services to more children and permit its centers to join into a consortium of private business and health care providers. That provision will enable agencies to partner with external organizations to conduct pilot programs in search for new methods of providing child care assistance to Federal employees.

So, once again, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and your subcommittee for taking the time to explore what I consider to be an important issue today. Our children are so important. And the care they receive during their first 5 years of development is essential to raising intelligent, healthy, and productive members of society. We don't want to hear again of the horrible situation which forever changed the lives of Mark and Julie Fiedelholtz whose son spent only 2 hours in a day care center and found a tragic death.

This measure I think is an important first step in ensuring the positive development and growth of our children. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the committee in the future on additional child care measures. And I thank Congresswoman Maloney for showing her interest in the measure.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HORN. We thank you very much for that presentation. I know I'll floor-manage the bill, but I'd like to be a cosponsor. And Mrs. Maloney——

Mr. GILMAN. We appreciate that.

Mr. HORN. I think she would like to be.

Mrs. MALONEY. Absolutely.

Mr. GILMAN. I thank the gentle lady from New York for her support.

Mr. HORN. Well, we thank you very much for coming. I do not believe there are any other witnesses. If it's with the approval of the ranking minority member, we will go into markup on this.

Mrs. MALONEY. I would just like to add my voice in welcoming Mr. Gilman from the great State of New York for an innovative, brilliant piece of legislation that's a tribute to his leadership in so many areas and fields.

I am totally supportive. I think it is an absolutely fantastic idea. It will help with affordable and available and really quality day care. And it's a step in the right direction. I am thrilled to join you as a coworker in the passage of this bill.

And I thank you for being here and all the things you have done for New York and for children with this bill.

Mr. GILMAN. I thank the gentle lady for her kind words.

Mrs. MALONEY. And I would like my opening statement in the interest of time to be put in the record as read.

Mr. HORN. Without objection, that will occur.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GILMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the subcommittee.

[Whereupon, at 9:48 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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