

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9848

To direct the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress on the workforce, readiness, and policy challenges associated with military child care and military child development centers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 22, 2026

Ms. ESCOBAR introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Armed Services

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress on the workforce, readiness, and policy challenges associated with military child care and military child development centers, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Military Spouse Em-
5 ployment and Child Care Readiness Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. REPORT ON STRENGTHENING THE MILITARY CHILD**
2 **CARE WORKFORCE.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense
5 shall submit to the congressional defense committees a re-
6 port assessing workforce, readiness, and policy challenges
7 associated with military child care and military child devel-
8 opment centers.

9 (b) CONTENTS.—The report under subsection (a)
10 shall include the following:

11 (1) An analysis of the current workforce of
12 military child development centers, including—

13 (A) the percentage of employees who are
14 military spouses; and

15 (B) the percentage of employees who are
16 spouses of retired or separated members of the
17 Armed Forces.

18 (2) A feasibility assessment of increasing the
19 transferability of licenses or certifications for mili-
20 tary spouses employed at military child development
21 centers when accompanying a service member on a
22 permanent change of station.

23 (3) An assessment of vacancy rates across mili-
24 tary child development centers and the reasons for
25 such vacancies.

1 (4) An assessment of the number of additional
2 children who could be served by military child devel-
3 opment centers if such centers were fully staffed.

4 (5) A feasibility assessment of permitting mili-
5 tary spouses residing in on-post housing to provide
6 childcare within their homes under a supervisory
7 program coordinated by a military child development
8 center.

9 (6) Recommendations for incentives to attract
10 and retain military spouses in the military child care
11 workforce, including—

12 (A) professional development opportunities;

13 (B) stipend or subsidy programs; and

14 (C) flexible scheduling options.

15 (c) CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES DE-
16 FINED.—In this section, the term “congressional defense
17 committees” has the meaning given that term in section
18 101(a)(16) of title 10, United States Code.

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