

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 4918

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives for students to earn child care-related degrees and to work in child care facilities.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 24, 2026

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KING, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

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## A BILL

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives for students to earn child care-related degrees and to work in child care facilities.

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 “Right Start Child Care  
5 and Education Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. 3-YEAR CREDIT FOR INDIVIDUALS HOLDING CHILD**  
7 **CARE-RELATED DEGREES WHO WORK IN LI-**  
8 **CENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart C of part IV of sub-  
10 chapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of

1 1986 is amended by inserting after section 36B the fol-  
 2 lowing new section:

3 **“SEC. 36C. RIGHT START CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION**  
 4 **CREDIT.**

5 “(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an individual who  
 6 is an eligible child care provider for the taxable year, there  
 7 shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by  
 8 this chapter for the taxable year the amount of—

9 “(1) \$4,500, in the case of an eligible child care  
 10 provider with a bachelor’s degree described in sub-  
 11 section (c)(1)(A)(i),

12 “(2) \$3,000, in the case of an eligible child care  
 13 provider with an associate’s degree described in such  
 14 subsection, and

15 “(3) \$1,500, in any other case.

16 “(b) 3-YEAR CREDIT.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The credit allowable by  
 18 subsection (a) for any taxable year to an individual  
 19 shall be allowed for such year only if the individual  
 20 elects the application of this section for such year.

21 “(2) ELECTION.—An election to have this sec-  
 22 tion apply may not be made by an individual for any  
 23 taxable year if such an election by such individual is  
 24 in effect for any 3 prior taxable years.

1       “(c) ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER.—For pur-  
2 poses of this section—

3               “(1) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible child  
4 care provider’ means, for any taxable year, any indi-  
5 vidual if—

6                       “(A) as of the close of such taxable year,  
7 such individual—

8                               “(i) holds—

9                                       “(I) a bachelor’s degree, or

10                                       “(II) an associate’s degree,

11                                       in early childhood education, child care, or  
12                                       a related degree, and such degree was  
13                                       awarded by an eligible educational institu-  
14                                       tion (as defined in section 25A(f)(2)), or

15                                       “(ii) holds an active Child Develop-  
16                                       ment Associate credential issued by the  
17                                       Council for Professional Recognition, and

18                       “(B) during such taxable year, such indi-  
19                       vidual performs at least 1,200 hours of child  
20                       care services at a facility if—

21                               “(i) the principal use of the facility is  
22                               to provide child care services,

23                               “(ii) no more than 25 percent of the  
24                               children receiving child care services at the  
25                               facility are children (as defined in section

1           152(f)) of the individual or such individ-  
2           ual’s spouse, and

3           “(iii) the facility meets the require-  
4           ments of all applicable laws and regula-  
5           tions of the State or local government in  
6           which it is located, including the licensing  
7           of the facility as a child care facility.

8           Subparagraph (B)(i) shall not apply to a facil-  
9           ity which is the principal residence (within the  
10          meaning of section 121) of the operator of the  
11          facility.

12          “(2) CHILD CARE SERVICES.—The term ‘child  
13          care services’ means child care and early childhood  
14          education.”.

15          (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

16                (1) Section 6211(b)(4)(A) of the Internal Rev-  
17                enue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting “, 36C”  
18                after “36B”.

19                (2) Paragraph (2) of section 1324(b) of title  
20                31, United States Code, is amended by inserting “,  
21                36C” after “36B”.

22          (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections  
23          for subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1  
24          of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by in-

1 serring after the item relating to section 36B the following  
2 new item:

“Sec. 36C. Right start child care and education credit.”.

3 (d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by  
4 this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after  
5 December 31, 2026.

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