



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

23 April 2018

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 166, "An Act To Increase Reimbursement for Child Care Services."

In 2016, the Department provided subsidies for over 9,000 children from over 5,600 families through the Child Care Subsidy program and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. Maine has the flexibility to determine the appropriate percentile for reimbursement. Currently, Maine is among the top 10 states for reimbursement of child care providers based on the actual dollar amount of monthly reimbursement paid to families, and only South Dakota and West Virginia reimburse child care providers at the 75th percentile of current market rates as proposed by this bill. Passage of this bill will serve to push up market rates for child care for everyone.

In addition, Maine is already one of the five most generous states when it comes to eligibility limits for the subsidy – a family can earn more than 250% of the Federal Poverty Level and still qualify for a subsidy. The Department estimates that this increase would cost nearly \$10 million dollars. Maine already has a generous child care subsidy and we do not need a new law to increase it even further.

For these reasons, I return LD 166 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor



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