

By Senator Berman

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to caregiving youth; defining the
3 terms "caregiving youth" and "household member";
4 creating the Florida Caregiving Youth Task Force
5 within the Department of Health for a specified
6 purpose; requiring the department to provide
7 administrative and technical assistance to the task
8 force; providing for membership, meetings, and duties
9 of the task force; providing duties for co-chairs of
10 the task force; requiring state agencies to assist and
11 cooperate with the task force upon request; requiring
12 the task force to submit a final report to the
13 Governor, the Legislature, the State Surgeon General,
14 and the director of the Office of Program Policy
15 Analysis and Government Accountability by a specified
16 date; providing for expiration of the task force;
17 creating s. 1006.045, F.S.; defining the terms
18 "caregiving youth" and "household member"; providing a
19 legislative finding; requiring the Department of
20 Education to maintain and make available to school
21 districts a comprehensive list of specified
22 information; requiring each middle and high school to
23 have a designated caregiving youth liaison; requiring
24 liaisons to connect caregiving youth to specified
25 supports and services; providing that caregiving youth
26 may count hours devoted to caring for a household
27 member toward certain community service hour
28 requirements; requiring the department to develop a
29 specified form and procedure; amending s. 1009.25,

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30 F.S.; exempting caregiving youth from payment of
31 certain tuition and fees under certain circumstances;
32 creating s. 1012.581, F.S.; requiring the Department
33 of Education to establish a training program for
34 school personnel related to caregiving youth for a
35 specified purpose; requiring the department to select
36 a regional or national authority on caregiving youth
37 to facilitate providing such training to school
38 personnel; providing requirements for the training;
39 requiring school districts to notify school personnel
40 who complete the training of specified information;
41 providing an effective date.

42
43 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

44
45 Section 1. Florida Caregiving Youth Task Force.-

46 (1) DEFINITIONS.-As used in this section, the term:

47 (a) "Caregiving youth" means a person younger than 18 years
48 of age who is responsible, to varying degrees, for the care of a
49 household member in need of assistance due to a chronic physical
50 or mental illness, a disability, frailty associated with aging,
51 substance abuse, or other similar condition. For purposes of
52 this definition, care of a household member includes, but is not
53 limited to, direct medical and personal care, household
54 management, language translation in medical settings, emotional
55 support, and parenting siblings.

56 (b) "Household member" means a parent, a grandparent, a
57 sibling, or any extended family member residing in the home,
58 whether related by whole or half blood, affinity, or adoption.

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59 (2) TASK FORCE CREATION.—The Florida Caregiving Youth Task
60 Force, a task force as defined in s. 20.03(8), Florida Statutes,
61 is created within the Department of Health to study and make
62 findings and recommendations regarding the necessary supports
63 for caregiving youth who are assisting the aging or adults with
64 disabilities. The department shall provide administrative and
65 technical assistance to the task force in the performance of its
66 duties.

67 (3) MEMBERSHIP.—

68 (a) The task force shall be composed of the following
69 members, to be appointed by July 1, 2023:

70 1. One member of the Senate, appointed by the President of
71 the Senate, to serve as a co-chair.

72 2. One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by
73 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to serve as a co-
74 chair.

75 3. One representative of the Department of Health,
76 appointed by the State Surgeon General.

77 4. One representative of the Department of Education,
78 appointed by the Commissioner of Education.

79 5. One representative of the Department of Children and
80 Families, appointed by the Secretary of Children and Families.

81 6. One representative of the Agency for Persons with
82 Disabilities, appointed by the director of the agency.

83 7. One representative of the Department of Elderly Affairs,
84 appointed by the Secretary of Elderly Affairs.

85 8. One representative of AARP Florida, appointed by the
86 state director of the organization.

87 9. One representative of the American Association of

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88 Caregiving Youth, appointed by the board of directors of the
89 association.

90 10. One representative of the Florida Developmental
91 Disabilities Council, appointed by the chair of the executive
92 committee of the council.

93 11. One representative of the Alzheimer's Association
94 Southeast Chapter, appointed by the executive director of the
95 chapter.

96 12. Seven members of the public, appointed by the Governor.
97 The Governor is encouraged to appoint public members
98 representing the following categories:

99 a. Adult day service providers.

100 b. Adult caregivers.

101 c. Caregiving youth.

102 d. Adult care recipients.

103 e. Secondary school teachers.

104 f. Health care professionals.

105 g. Home health agencies.

106 (b) Any vacancy occurring on the task force shall be filled
107 in the same manner as the original appointment.

108 (c) Members shall serve without compensation but are
109 entitled to reimbursement for per diem and travel expenses
110 pursuant to s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

111 (4) MEETINGS.—

112 (a) The task force shall hold its first organizational
113 meeting by August 1, 2023.

114 (b) The task force shall meet by teleconference or other
115 electronic means, if possible, to reduce costs. However, the
116 task force must ensure members of the public have meaningful

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117 access to such meetings.

118 (c) A majority of the members of the task force constitutes
119 a quorum, and the task force may not meet or take any action
120 without a quorum present.

121 (5) DUTIES.—The task force shall do all of the following:

122 (a) Develop a list of evidence-based questions or criteria
123 that school districts may use to identify caregiving youth in
124 their respective districts and determine the extent of need for
125 supports for those caregiving youth based on the level of
126 responsibility they have in caring for a household member.

127 (b) Identify current best practices for supporting other
128 at-risk populations in secondary schools which would also
129 benefit caregiving youth in the pursuit of their personal
130 achievement and successful future careers.

131 (c) Survey the school districts in this state to determine
132 which, if any, support services are currently offered to
133 students, including, but not limited to, tutoring, mentoring,
134 occupational skills training, leadership development, and
135 guidance and counseling, and require school districts to
136 identify any eligibility requirements for accessing such
137 services.

138 (d) Identify state and federal funding and resource
139 opportunities that may be applicable to and would benefit
140 caregiving youth, including whether a request for federal
141 approval is needed before such opportunities may be offered to
142 caregiving youth who do not otherwise qualify for such
143 opportunities.

144 (e) Study additional innovative and creative means to
145 support caregiving youth so that they can continue providing

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146 necessary in-home care for aging adults and adults with
147 disabilities while pursuing an education or skills training.

148 (f) Identify ways in which the Department of Health,
149 Department of Education, and Department of Children and Families
150 can work together to provide comprehensive and streamlined
151 support services to caregiving youth in this state.

152 (g) Identify any legislative barriers to implementing any
153 of the tasks force's recommendations.

154 (6) CO-CHAIR DUTIES.—The co-chairs of the task force are
155 responsible for guiding the administration of the task force in
156 performance of its duties, including, but not limited to, all of
157 the following:

158 (a) Coordinating appointments to the task force to ensure
159 that members are assembled in a timely manner.

160 (b) Setting a date, time, and place for the initial
161 organizational meeting, as required under subsection (4), and
162 subsequent meetings.

163 (c) Supervising the preparation and distribution of meeting
164 notices, agendas, minutes, correspondence, and reports of the
165 task force.

166 (d) After the task force's organizational meeting, sending
167 to the director of the Office of Program Policy Analysis and
168 Government Accountability a list of the members appointed and
169 the meeting notice, agenda, and minutes.

170 (e) Directing the task force's study of policies,
171 resources, and programs available for caregiving youth.

172 (f) Organizing methods to obtain relevant testimony on the
173 needs of caregiving youth.

174 (g) Overseeing the process of compiling an inventory of the

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175 resources available to caregiving youth.

176 (h) Ensuring the timely submission of the task force's
177 final report under subsection (8).

178 (7) AGENCY COOPERATION.—All state agencies shall assist and
179 cooperate with the task force as requested and shall provide
180 reasonable and necessary support staff and materials to the task
181 force.

182 (8) REPORT.—The task force shall submit a report of its
183 findings and recommendations to the Governor, the President of
184 the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the
185 State Surgeon General, and the director of the Office of Program
186 Policy Analysis and Government Accountability by January 1,
187 2025.

188 (9) EXPIRATION.—This section expires June 30, 2025.

189 Section 2. Section 1006.045, Florida Statutes, is created
190 to read:

191 1006.045 Caregiving youth.—

192 (1) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

193 (a) "Caregiving youth" means a person younger than 18 years
194 of age who is responsible, to varying degrees, for the care of a
195 household member in need of assistance due to a chronic physical
196 or mental illness, a disability, frailty associated with aging,
197 substance abuse, or other similar condition. For purposes of
198 this definition, care of a household member includes, but is not
199 limited to, direct medical and personal care, household
200 management, language translation in medical settings, emotional
201 support, and parenting siblings.

202 (b) "Household member" means a parent, a grandparent, a
203 sibling, or any extended family member residing in the home,

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204 whether related by whole or half blood, affinity, or adoption.

205 (2) LEGISLATIVE FINDING.—The Legislature recognizes that
206 children and adolescents who serve as caregivers to chronically
207 ill, injured, elderly, or disabled family members are at an
208 academic disadvantage and deserve support in their pursuit of
209 personal achievement and successful future careers.

210 (3) RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR CAREGIVING YOUTH.—The
211 department shall maintain and make available to school districts
212 a comprehensive list of benefits and resources available to
213 caregiving youth in this state.

214 (4) CAREGIVING YOUTH LIAISONS.—Each middle and high school
215 must have a designated caregiving youth liaison to connect
216 students who are caregiving youth to available supports and
217 services that will promote their academic success, including,
218 but not limited to, all of the following:

219 (a) Any free remote and in-person tutoring or mentoring
220 opportunities, professional training opportunities, mental
221 health services, transportation services, and financial
222 assistance available to the caregiving youth.

223 (b) Information on eligibility for tuition and fee waiver
224 programs for caregiving youth under s. 1009.25.

225 (c) The ability of caregiving youth to count hours devoted
226 to caring for a household member toward community service
227 requirements for high school graduation and for participation in
228 the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

229 (d) Any state or federal resources available to caregiving
230 youth to support their education and training for successful
231 future careers.

232 (5) COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS.—The hours that high school

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233 students devote to care of a household member may be counted
234 toward meeting community service requirements for high school
235 graduation and for participation in the Florida Bright Futures
236 Scholarship Program. The department shall develop a standard
237 form for reporting such hours for community service and a
238 procedure for submitting such hours for approval.

239 Section 3. Paragraph (h) is added to subsection (1) of
240 section 1009.25, Florida Statutes, to read:

241 1009.25 Fee exemptions.—

242 (1) The following students are exempt from the payment of
243 tuition and fees, including lab fees, at a school district that
244 provides workforce education programs, Florida College System
245 institution, or state university:

246 (h) A student who is a caregiving youth as defined in s.
247 1006.045, provided that he or she pursues education or training
248 in a health-related field of study.

249 Section 4. Section 1012.581, Florida Statutes, is created
250 to read:

251 1012.581 Training on caregiving youth.—

252 (1) The Department of Education shall establish an
253 evidence-based training program to help school personnel
254 identify students who are caregiving youth as defined in s.
255 1006.045, understand the difficulties facing such students, and
256 learn skills to support caregiving youth who are struggling
257 academically due to the added responsibility of caring for a
258 household member.

259 (2) The Department of Education shall select a regional or
260 national authority on caregiving youth to facilitate providing
261 the training to all school personnel in elementary, middle, and

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262 high schools.

263 (3) The training program must include, but need not be
264 limited to:

265 (a) An overview of caregiving youth, including an
266 explanation of the nature and varying degrees of responsibility
267 caregiving youth assume in providing care for a household member
268 and how this may contribute to underperformance in school.

269 (b) Instruction on how to identify caregiving youth and
270 determine the extent of their need for support in the pursuit of
271 personal achievement and successful future careers, including
272 procedures and practices school personnel can implement to
273 promote the academic success of caregiving youth in their
274 classrooms.

275 (c) Information on available resources for caregiving youth
276 and how school personnel can connect their students to such
277 resources.

278 (4) Each school district shall notify all school personnel
279 who have received training under this section of the resources
280 and services available for caregiving youth in the school
281 district and the individual to contact if a student needs such
282 services.

283 Section 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.