

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 to establish a training program for school personnel  
34 related to caregiving youth for a specified purpose;  
35 requiring the department to select a regional or  
36 national authority on caregiving youth to facilitate  
37 providing such training to school personnel; providing  
38 requirements for the training; requiring school  
39 districts to notify school personnel who complete the  
40 training of specified information; providing an  
41 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, by affinity, or by

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59 adoption.

60 (2) TASK FORCE CREATION.—The Florida Caregiving Youth Task  
61 Force, a task force as defined in s. 20.03(5), Florida Statutes,  
62 is created within the Department of Health to study and make  
63 findings and recommendations regarding the necessary supports  
64 for caregiving youth who are assisting the aging or adults with  
65 disabilities. The department shall provide administrative and  
66 technical assistance to the task force in the performance of its  
67 duties.

68 (3) MEMBERSHIP.—

69 (a) The task force shall be composed of the following  
70 members, to be appointed by July 1, 2024:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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88 9. One representative of the American Association of  
89 Caregiving Youth, appointed by the board of directors of the  
90 association.

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

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

97 12. Seven members of the public, appointed by the Governor.  
98 The Governor is encouraged to appoint a public member  
99 representing each of the following:

100 a. Adult day care centers.

101 b. Adult caregivers.

102 c. Caregiving youth.

103 d. Adult care recipients.

104 e. Secondary school teachers.

105 f. Health care professionals.

106 g. Home health agencies.

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

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

112 (4) MEETINGS.—

113 (a) The task force shall hold its first organizational  
114 meeting by August 1, 2024.

115 (b) The task force shall meet by teleconference or other  
116 electronic means, if possible, to reduce costs. However, the

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117 task force must ensure that members of the public have  
118 meaningful access to such meetings.

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

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

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

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

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

139 (d) Identify state and federal funding and resources that  
140 may be applicable to and would benefit caregiving youth and  
141 determine whether a request for federal approval is needed  
142 before such opportunities may be offered to caregiving youth who  
143 do not otherwise qualify for such 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, the  
149 Department of Education, and the Department of Children and  
150 Families can work together to provide comprehensive and  
151 streamlined 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 task force in performance of its  
156 duties, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

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

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

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

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

169 (e) Directing the task force's study of applicable policies  
170 and resources and programs that are or should be available to  
171 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; resources and support; community  
192 service hours.—

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

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

203 (b) "Household member" means a parent, a grandparent, a

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204 sibling, or any extended family member residing in the home,  
205 whether related by whole or half blood, by affinity, or by  
206 adoption.

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

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

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

221 (a) Any available free, remote, or in-person tutoring or  
222 mentoring opportunities, professional training opportunities,  
223 mental health services, transportation services, and financial  
224 assistance.

225 (b) Information on eligibility for tuition and fee waiver  
226 programs established under s. 1009.25.

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

231 (d) Any state or federal resources available to caregiving  
232 youth to support their education and training for successful



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233 future careers.

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

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

243 1009.25 Fee exemptions.—

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

248 (h) A student who is a caregiving youth as defined in s.  
249 1006.045, provided that he or she pursues education or training  
250 in a health-related field of study.

251 Section 4. Section 1012.581, Florida Statutes, is created  
252 to read:

253 1012.581 Training on caregiving youth.—

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

261 (2) The department shall select a regional or national

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262 authority on caregiving youth to facilitate providing the  
263 training to all school personnel in elementary, middle, and high  
264 schools.

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

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

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

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

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

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