

## **LD 1426 An Act to Enhance the Pre-kindergarten Experience for Maine Children**

**Bill sponsor: Rep. Emily Cain**

**Referred to: Education and Cultural Affairs**

**Committee vote: Carried over**

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### **SUMMARY**

LD 1426 proposed to require pre-kindergarten early childhood care and preschool education programs operated by school administrative units to receive certification from the Department of Education. Certification would require, at a minimum, collaboration with existing community based child care and education providers, an analysis of the effect of the program on federally funded early childhood care in the district and an assessment of how the program will affect access to available local child care. The bill would also require that at least 20% of all children in the proposed program would be placed with existing providers that meet quality standards established by the department. The bill also directs the department to adopt major substantive rules that would establish program standards including:

- A. Maximum class sizes;
- B. Adult to child ratios;
- C. Teacher and assistant teacher qualifications;
- D. Curricula and instruction;
- E. Student screening and assessment;
- F. Nutrition and physical environment;
- G. Access to outdoor play areas; and
- H. Family involvement and support services.

*Supporters of this bill are seeking to codify the approval process for local school systems requesting State reimbursement for children enrolled in a pre-K program,*

**Cost to General Fund:      Undetermined**