



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2022-1450, **Version:** 1

A resolution appropriating \$7,519,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds from Fund #30216 to increase access to existing high quality child care centers, provide more resources to home based child care, and invest in efforts to build capacity and build up high-quality child care programs.

WHEREAS, on June 15, 2021, the Metropolitan Council passed Resolution RS2021-966, a resolution which accepted grant funds for local government support from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ("ARP Funds") from the U.S. Department of the Treasury to The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson Count, which was subsequently signed into law by Mayor John Cooper on June 16, 2021; and,

WHEREAS, Resolution RS2021-966 established a COVID-19 Financial Oversight Committee ("the Committee") whose role is to collect, consider, and recommend appropriate uses of the ARP Funds as designated by the Metropolitan Council disbursement plan. The Committee will submit its reports and recommendations to the Mayor, the Director of Finance, and the Metropolitan Council not later than June 30, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, there are federal requirements for use of ARP Funds that require that these funds be expended or obligated on or before December 31, 2024; and,

WHEREAS, the Committee recognizes that providing access to local childcare is a critical priority identified by the community and that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused negative financial effects on families across Davidson County; and,

WHEREAS, the Committee recognizes there is a gap between the cost of high-quality care and the State's increasing but inadequate reimbursement rate, as well as the cost to serve low-income families on a sliding scale, a population of families that live at or below 200% of the federal poverty line, and recognize far more childcare centers need to be incentivized to serve more families; and,

WHEREAS, the Committee recognizes that home-based childcare providers in low income communities are isolated from indispensable resources needed to operate high-quality child care businesses, and if these providers were better resourced, they could be the solution to high-quality early learning access in the most marginalized communities; and,

WHEREAS, the Committee recognizes that a coordinated, non-siloed approach to capacity building is currently lacking in Davidson County; and,

WHEREAS, the Committee recognizes here is a critical need to work collaboratively to advocate for policy change, implement beta-test models of best practice, enhance existing and create new partnerships and collaborations in order to create more access to higher quality child care programs across the county, and;

WHEREAS, United Way of Greater Nashville and the Raphah Institute have proposed a two-year program that will incentivize center-based and home-based child care, and a one-year program that will provide consulting, research and development of capacity building, as further described in Exhibit A; and,

WHEREAS, it is to the benefit of the citizens of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County that this resolution be approved.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council accepts this resolution as a recommendation of the COVID-19 Financial Oversight Committee.

Section 2. That \$5,546,000.00 from the Covid-19 American Rescue Plan Fund #30216 is hereby appropriated to United Way of Greater Nashville to be used to administer the program for existing child care centers described in Exhibit A.

Section 3. That \$1,823,000.00 from the Covid-19 American Rescue Plan Fund #30216 is hereby appropriated to the Raphah Institute to be used to administer the program described for home based child care centers in Exhibit A.

Section 4. That \$150,000.00 from the Covid-19 American Rescue Plan Fund #30216 is hereby appropriated to United Way of Greater Nashville to convene cross-sector groups to develop a birth-through-age-eight framework and an implementation plan that will directly address affordable, accessible, and high-quality child care in Davidson County as described in Exhibit A.

Section 5. This resolution shall take effect from and after its final passage, the welfare of the public requiring it.

Analysis

This resolution appropriates \$7,519,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds to increase access to existing high quality child care centers, provide more resources to home based child care, and invest in efforts to build capacity and build up high-quality child care programs.

The COVID-19 Financial Oversight Committee recommends appropriating \$5,546,000 to the United Way of Greater Nashville to be used to administer the program for existing child care centers and \$1,823,000 to the Raphah Institute to be used to administer the program for home based child care centers. \$150,000 would be appropriated to the United Way of Greater Nashville to convene cross-sector groups to develop a birth-through-age-eight framework and an implementation plan that will directly address affordable, accessible, and high-quality child care in Davidson County.

Fiscal Note: This \$7,519,000 appropriation would be the 22nd resolution appropriating from the American Recovery Plan Act (ARP) Fund for a cumulative total of \$105,429,250. The total grant award is \$259,810,600 and the first half of this amount was received in July 2021.