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Welcome to Legislative Trends, your go-to source for the latest updates on state policy action affecting infants, toddlers, and their families during legislative sessions. Each week, our team of policy analysts tracks key legislative movements, from state budget proposals impacting Medicaid and SNAP to bills advancing paid family leave, child care, and other critical prenatal-to-3 policies. Below is a sampling of legislation we're tracking from across the country, [all grounded in the evidence-based policies highlighted in our Prenatal-to-3 Policy Roadmap](#). Stay informed and ahead of the curve with our timely analysis of the trends shaping early childhood policy.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Doulas:** Arkansas and Maryland sent bills to expand access to doula services to their respective Governors.
 - **Child Care:** Montana and Oklahoma are advancing legislation to make child care workers eligible for child care subsidies.
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LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Administrative Burden

- **Arizona** [H.B. 2165](#), which would restrict the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to purchase soft drinks, was vetoed by Gov. Hobbs.

- **Oklahoma** [H.B. 1575](#) would establish a unified and streamlined eligibility and enrollment system in the Department of Human Services to include SNAP, TANF, WIC, Medicaid, and energy assistance.
- **Texas** [H.B. 5243](#), which would restrict the use of SNAP benefits to purchase energy drinks, sweetened beverages, candy, chips, and cookies, was heard in the House. The bill's companion, [S.B. 379](#), passed the Senate.

Child Care

- **Montana** [H.B. 456](#) would make child care workers eligible for child care subsidies if their income is less than twice the state median income.
- **North Carolina** [H. 412](#) would decouple state quality ratings from subsidized reimbursement rates, expand maximum group ratios, and establish a workgroup to explore group liability insurance for child care providers.
- **Oklahoma** [H.B. 1849](#) would make child care workers eligible for child care subsidies regardless of their income.
- **Texas** [H.B. 3963](#) would require the creation of an early childhood data system by January 1, 2027.

Doulas

- **Arkansas** [H.B. 1252](#) would direct the Department of Health to oversee community-based doula certification and registry and require Medicaid reimbursement for doula services by Dec. 31, 2025. The bill passed both chambers and is headed to the Governor.
- **Illinois** [H.B. 2423](#) would mandate that hospitals and birthing centers have publicly posted policies guaranteeing that birthing people with Medicaid can have access to a doula.
- **Maryland** [H.B. 1251](#) also known as the Doula and Birthing Transparency Act, would require hospitals to have a publicly posted policy that at least one doula is allowed to be present during births. The bill passed both chambers and is headed to the Governor.

Home Visiting

- **Louisiana** [H.B. 382](#) would require coverage of evidence-based home visiting services, as defined by HomVEE, by any health coverage plan in the state that provides benefits for maternity services.

Medicaid

- **Arizona** submitted a waiver to implement work requirements for Medicaid. [Arizona's proposal](#) would also allow the state to institute a lifetime limit of 5 years for certain adults and impose cost-sharing requirements.
- **Arkansas** submitted a waiver to implement work requirements for Medicaid. [Arkansas's proposal](#) would impose work requirements for individuals ages 19 to 64 with incomes between 100% and 138% of the FPL.
- **Arkansas** [H.B. 1004](#), which would extend postpartum Medicaid coverage to 12 months, did not receive enough votes to pass out of committee to the full Senate.
- The **Kansas** Legislature overrode Gov. Kelly's veto of [H.B. 2240](#), which would restrict state agency authority to make changes to the Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, or child care programs without legislative approval.
- **Texas** [H.B. 321](#) would introduce express lane eligibility to notify parents of their children's Medicaid eligibility when they apply for SNAP.

Paid Family and Medical Leave

- **Arkansas** [H.B. 1017](#) would expand paid maternity leave for teachers by adding the placement of a foster child under the age of 1 as a qualifying reason for leave.
- **Nevada** [A.B. 388](#) would require public and private employers with more than 50 employees to provide up to 12 weeks of PFML.
- **Washington** [H.B. 1213](#) would make several changes to the state's PFML program, including expanding job protection benefits to those who have been employed at the employer for at least 180 days and reducing the minimum claim duration from 8 to 4 hours.

State Minimum Wage

- **Louisiana** [S.B. 206](#) would gradually increase the state minimum wage until it reached \$14.00 by 2029.
- **Oklahoma** [H.B. 1833](#) would create a task force to develop a plan for phasing out the subminimum wage for workers with disabilities.

Tax Credits

- **Montana** [H.B. 220](#) would create a child tax credit (CTC) worth \$1200 per child under age 6 effective TY 2026. [S.B. 321](#) would create a CTC worth \$600 per child under age 6 effective TY 2026 and requires families have earned income and eligible children have a SSN.
- **Oregon** [S.B. 121](#) would extend the sunset date for the state's refundable earned income tax credit (EITC) from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2032.

Thank you for staying up to date with this week's legislative updates. Our team is dedicated to monitoring the policies and trends that impact the prenatal-to-3 space and beyond. For deeper insights into the evidence-based policies driving early childhood progress, explore our [Prenatal-to-3 Policy Roadmap](#). If you have any questions or have an important update from your state, please contact Alyssa Rafa, Assistant Policy Director, at alyssa.rafa@vanderbilt.edu. Let's work together to drive lasting progress for young children and their families.

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