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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

- **Child Care:** Several states are advancing bills to support the child care workforce and to develop new funding streams.
 - **Doulas:** Arkansas enacted legislation to require Medicaid coverage of doula services.
 - **Medicaid:** Alaska and Rhode Island are working to require continuous Medicaid eligibility for children.
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LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Administrative Burden

- **South Carolina** [S.B. 589](#) would prohibit the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to purchase soda or candy, among other provisions.
- **Rhode Island** [H.B. 5392](#) would automatically enroll any families eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in SNAP.

Child Care

- **Hawaii** [H.B. 692](#) would expand eligibility for the Preschool Open Doors Program to include children who are 2 years old, effective January 1, 2026. The bill is headed to the Governor.
- **Iowa** [S.F. 445](#) would make child care educators eligible for child care subsidies if they work at a program that accepts child care subsidies.
- **Kansas** Gov. Kelly signed [H.B. 2045](#) into law, which consolidates early childhood care and education programs into the Office of Early Childhood and modifies child care regulatory structures.
- **Montana** [S.B. 287](#) would establish the Montana Growth and Opportunity Trust, allocating a portion of funds to a new Montana early childhood state special revenue account.
- **Ohio** [S.B.177](#) would create a pilot program to make child care workers eligible for child care subsidies regardless of their income for 2 years.
- **Oklahoma** [H.B. 1849](#) would make child care workers eligible for child care subsidies regardless of income through November 1, 2028.

Doulas

- **Arkansas** [H.B. 1252](#) directs the Department of Health to oversee community-based doula certification and registry and directs the Department of Human Services to enact rules to reimburse doulas through Medicaid by Dec 31, 2025. This bill was enacted.
- **Louisiana** [H.B. 454](#) would require Medicaid coverage of doula services effective January 1, 2026. Covered benefits would include at least five prenatal and three postpartum visits and attendance at labor and delivery.
- **Michigan** [S.B. 31](#) would require hospitals to have a policy that allows birthing people to have at least one support person or spouse and a doula present throughout labor and delivery.
- **Missouri** [H.B. 1095](#) would codify the existing doula Medicaid benefit and include separate coverage for childbirth education classes.

- **Nevada** [S.B. 192](#) would require hospitals and birth centers to allow doulas to accompany birthing people and require private insurance coverage of doula services for policies that provide maternity care.

Early Intervention

- **Illinois** [S.B. 2475/H.B. 3078](#) would extend eligibility under the Early Intervention Services System Act to also include children who are determined eligible for early childhood special education services.
- **Nevada** [S.B. 368](#) would ensure that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act will remain applicable in the state if repealed federally.

Medicaid

- **Alaska** [H.B. 151](#) would require the state to implement continuous Medicaid eligibility for children from birth to age 6.
- **Louisiana** [S.B. 130](#) would prohibit the use of ex parte renewals for Medicaid except as required by federal law, prohibit the acceptance of self-attestations of income for Medicaid, and require additional monthly data matching requirements in the Medicaid program.
- **Rhode Island** [H.B. 5205](#) would require the state to implement continuous Medicaid eligibility for children from birth to age 3.

Paid Family and Medical Leave

- **Alaska** [H.B. 193](#) would create a paid parental leave program providing up to 26 weeks of leave.
- **Hawaii** [S.C.R. 145](#), a resolution requiring the state Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to convene a paid family and medical leave working group, was adopted.

State Minimum Wage

- **Nebraska** [L.B. 258](#), which would cap annual cost-of-living adjustments to 1.5% and would establish a youth minimum wage of \$13.50 for youth ages 14 and 15, passed favorably out of committee.

Tax Credits

- **Louisiana** [H.B. 642](#) would repeal the state's existing refundable state earned income tax credit (EITC) worth 5% of the federal credit effective tax year 2026.
- **Montana** [H.B. 220](#) would create a refundable state child tax credit (CTC) worth \$1,200 per child under age 6. [H.B. 337](#), which would increase the generosity of the state's refundable EITC from 10% to 20% of the federal credit, is headed to the Governor.
- **New Mexico** Gov. Lujan Grisham [vetoed H.B. 14](#), a tax package that would have repealed the Working Families Tax Credit and introduced a new structure for the EITC that was not based on the federal credit.
- **Rhode Island** [S.B. 244](#) would increase the generosity of the state's existing refundable EITC from 16% to 20% of the federal credit.

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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