

119<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 7677

To require the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study regarding fraud prevention measures in certain Federal early childhood education, child care, and child nutrition programs, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 25, 2026

Mr. OWENS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

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## A BILL

To require the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study regarding fraud prevention measures in certain Federal early childhood education, child care, and child nutrition programs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Closing the Provider  
5 Fraud Gap Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. GAO STUDY AND REPORT ON PROVIDER-RELATED**  
2 **FRAUD.**

3 (a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United  
4 States shall conduct a study regarding fraud prevention  
5 measures in Federal early childhood education, child care,  
6 and child nutrition programs that shall include an analysis  
7 of—

8 (1) the effectiveness of procedures and meas-  
9 ures to prevent fraud carried out by providers of  
10 services under such programs;

11 (2) whether the data the Federal Government  
12 receives in connection with such programs (including  
13 through audits and reporting requirements) is—

14 (A) sufficient to successfully identify fraud  
15 carried out under such programs; and

16 (B) used effectively by the Federal Govern-  
17 ment to identify potential fraud carried out  
18 under such programs; and

19 (3) with respect to the Child Care and Develop-  
20 ment Block Grant program established under the  
21 Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of  
22 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.)—

23 (A) the program integrity results for  
24 States that have delegated responsibilities re-  
25 lated to program management and administra-

1           tion to counties, local municipalities, or other  
2           entities; and

3           (B) whether any corrective action plans  
4           have been implemented by States to improve  
5           program integrity results, including any meas-  
6           urable outcomes from implementing such a cor-  
7           rective action plan.

8           (b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date  
9           of enactment of this section, the Comptroller General of  
10          the United States shall submit to the Committee on Edu-  
11          cation and Workforce of the House of Representatives and  
12          the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pen-  
13          sions of the Senate a report containing—

14               (1) the results of the study conducted under  
15               subsection (a); and

16               (2) any regulatory or legislative recommenda-  
17               tions to improve fraud prevention measures in Fed-  
18               eral early childhood education, child care, and child  
19               nutrition programs.

20           (c) FEDERAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION,  
21          CHILD CARE, AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS DE-  
22          FINED.—For the purposes of this section, the term “Fed-  
23          eral early childhood education, child care, and child nutri-  
24          tion programs” includes—

1           (1) Head Start programs (including Early  
2 Head Start programs) carried out under the Head  
3 Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.);

4           (2) the Child and Adult Care Food Program  
5 under section 17 of the Richard B. Russell National  
6 School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1766); and

7           (3) the Child Care and Development Block  
8 Grant program established under the Child Care and  
9 Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.  
10 9857 et seq.).

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