



The Daily Dish

Why? Why? Why?

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The Trump administration is evidently preparing a rulemaking that would permit married couples with a stay-at-home spouse to receive taxpayer funds as a “child care subsidy,” thereby creating the only federal subsidy to pay parents to stay home to raise children. This is bad policy, an abuse of the process, and, ultimately, bad politics

At present, there is a Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the source of roughly \$12 billion annually for a federal-state program that subsidizes child care for low-income families with parents who are working, attending school, or participating in education or job training. CCDF funds are distributed to states, which determine eligibility and administer their own subsidy programs. Generally, families must have income below a state-established threshold and states then pay the provider on the family’s behalf. (The family generally contributes a copayment.)

The Trump proposal, generally attributed to Vice President J.D. Vance, would broaden the purpose of CCDF by allowing funds to support parent-provided child care. This would expand the types of child care arrangements eligible for federal assistance and potentially increase the number of families competing for existing CCDF funds.

According to [The New York Times](#):

The proposal “creates the option for a new category of care, parent-based child care, that will allow one married parent to receive C.C.D.F. assistance to care for their own child, while a spouse works at least 35 hours per week,” according to a draft document viewed by The Times.

Who works or does not work; who takes care of a child; or who takes a child to child care is the family’s business. It is certainly not the place of the federal government to put its thumb

on the scale using taxpayer dollars. And it is an Orwellian abuse to describe as “conservative” to have the government intruding to impose judgment on what is right or not for parents. That’s the stuff of the progressive left.

The process is also detestable. Will this be debated on the floor of the House? The Senate? Approved by the peoples’ elected representatives? No. The *Times* reports that this would be imposed by a rulemaking from administration lackeys in the Department of Health and Human Services. That’s an abuse of the process.

It is also mystifying politics. Does anyone in the administration really believe that this will woo voters in the 2028 presidential election? If a swing voter has any fiscal sense, she will be offended by another expansion of an already-bloated federal government. And if she doesn’t, don’t Republicans recognize that they will always be outbid by those on the left?

Bad policy. Bad process. Bad politics. Why?