A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to revenue and taxation; to amend sections 77-2717 and 77-2734.03, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014, and sections 68-1201, 71-1962, and 77-2715.07, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2015; to adopt the School Readiness Tax Credit Act; to provide income tax credits; to exclude tax credits from certain eligibility determinations; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Sections 1 to 7 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the School Readiness Tax Credit Act.

Sec. 2. The Legislature finds that the benefits of quality child care and early childhood education are indisputable and that a striking connection exists between children’s learning experiences well before kindergarten and their later school success.

Sec. 3. For purposes of the School Readiness Tax Credit Act:
(1) Child means an individual who is five years of age or less;
(2) Child care and education provider means a person who owns or operates an eligible program;
(3) Department means the Department of Revenue;
(4) Eligible program means an applicable child care and early childhood education program as defined in section 71-1954 that has applied to participate in the quality rating and improvement system developed under the Step Up to Quality Child Care Act and has been assigned a quality scale rating;
(5) Eligible staff member means an individual who is employed with an eligible program for at least six months of the taxable year and who is listed in the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System and classified as provided in subsection (4) of section 71-1962. Eligible staff member does not include certificated teaching and administrative staff employed by programs established pursuant to section 79-1104; and
(6) Quality scale rating means the rating of an eligible program under the Step Up to Quality Child Care Act which is expressed in terms of steps, with step one being the lowest rating and step five being the highest rating.

Sec. 4. (1) A child care and education provider whose eligible program provides services to children who participate in the child care subsidy program established pursuant to section 68-1202 may apply to the department to receive a nonrefundable tax credit against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967.
(2) The nonrefundable credit provided in this section shall be an amount equal to the average monthly number of children described in subsection (1) of this section who are attending the child care and education provider’s eligible program, multiplied by an amount based upon the quality scale rating of such eligible program as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Scale Rating of Eligible Program</th>
<th>Tax Credit Per Child Attending Eligible Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step Five</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step Four</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step Three</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step Two</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step One</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) A child care and education provider shall apply for the credit provided in this section by submitting an application to the department with the following information:
(a) The number of children described in subsection (1) of this section who attended the child care and education provider’s eligible program during each month of the most recently completed taxable year;
(b) Documentation to show the quality scale rating of the child care and education provider’s eligible program; and
(c) Any other documentation required by the department.

(4) Subject to subsection (5) of this section, if the department determines that the child care and education provider qualifies for tax credits under this section, it shall approve the application and certify the amount of credits approved to the child care and education provider.

(5) The department shall consider applications in the order in which they are received and may approve tax credits under this section in any taxable year.
until the aggregate limit allowed under subsection (1) of section 6 of this act has been reached.

Sec. 5. (1) An eligible staff member may apply to the department to receive a refundable tax credit against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967. The amount of the credit shall be based on the eligible staff member’s classification under subsection (4) of section 71-1962 as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible Staff Member’s Classification</th>
<th>Tax Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level Four</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Three</td>
<td>$1,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Two</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level One</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) An eligible staff member shall apply for the credit provided in this section by submitting an application to the department with the following information:

(a) The eligible staff member’s name and place of employment;
(b) An attestation form provided by the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System verifying the level at which the eligible staff member is classified under subsection (4) of section 71-1962; and
(c) Any other documentation required by the department.

(3) Subject to subsection (4) of this section, if the department determines that the eligible staff member qualifies for tax credits under this section, it shall approve the application and certify the amount of credits approved to the eligible staff member.

(4) The department shall consider applications in the order in which they are received and may approve tax credits under this section in any taxable year until the aggregate limit allowed under subsection (1) of section 6 of this act has been reached.

(5) The credit provided in this section shall be available for taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2017, and before January 1, 2022, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(6) For taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2018, and before January 1, 2022, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, the Tax Commissioner shall adjust the credit amounts provided for in subsection (1) of this section by the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, as prepared by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, for the twelve-month period ending on August 31 of the year preceding the taxable year.

Sec. 6. (1) The department may approve tax credits under the School Readiness Tax Credit Act each taxable year until the total amount of credits approved for the taxable year reaches five million dollars.

(2) A child care and education provider shall claim any tax credits granted under the act by attaching the tax credit certification received from the department under section 4 of this act to the child care and education provider’s tax return. An eligible staff member shall claim any tax credits granted under the act by attaching the tax credit certification received from the department under section 5 of this act to the eligible staff member’s tax return.

(3) If the department finds that a person has obtained a credit by fraud or misrepresentation, the credits shall be disallowed and the taxpayer’s state income tax for such taxable year shall be increased by the amount necessary to recapture the credit.

(4) Credits granted to a taxpayer, but later disallowed, may be recovered by the department within three years from the end of the year in which the credit was claimed.

Sec. 7. The department may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the School Readiness Tax Credit Act.

Sec. 8. Section 68-1201, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2015, is amended to read:

68-1201 In determining eligibility for the program for aid to dependent children pursuant to section 43-512, for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program administered by the State of Nebraska pursuant to the federal Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, 7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq., and for the child care subsidy program established pursuant to section 68-1202, the following shall not be included in determining assets or income:

(1) Assets in or income from an educational savings account, a Coverdell educational savings account described in 26 U.S.C. 530, a qualified tuition program established pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 529, or any similar savings account or plan established to save for qualified higher education expenses as defined in section 85-1802;
(2) Income from scholarships or grants related to postsecondary education, whether merit-based, need-based, or a combination thereof;
(3) Income from postsecondary educational work-study programs, whether federally funded, funded by a postsecondary educational institution, or funded
percent of the federal credit allowed under section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code; and
(5) Income from any tax credits received pursuant to the School Readiness Tax Credit Act.

Sec. 9. Section 71-1962, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2015, is amended to read:
71-1962 (1) Not later than March 1, 2014, the State Department of Education shall create and operate the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System. The system shall be designed in order to:
(a) Establish a data base of Nebraska's early childhood education workforce;
(b) Verify educational degrees and professional credentials held and relevant training completed by employees of participating applicable child care and early childhood education programs; and
(c) Provide such information to the Department of Health and Human Services for use in evaluating applications to be rated at a step above step one under section 71-1959.
(2) When an applicable child care or early childhood education program participating in the quality rating and improvement system developed pursuant to section 71-1955 applies under section 71-1959 to be rated at a step above step one, the child care or early childhood education program shall report the educational degrees and professional credentials held and relevant training completed by its child care and early childhood education employees to the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System for the program to be eligible for a quality scale rating above step one.
(3) Any child care or early childhood education provider residing or working in Nebraska may report his or her educational degrees and professional credentials held, relevant training completed, and work history to the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System.
(4) The State Department of Education shall develop a classification system for all employees of applicable child care and early childhood education programs listed in the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System. The classification system shall be based on the employees' educational degrees and professional credentials held, relevant training completed, and work history and shall be made up of four levels, with level one being the least qualified and level four being the most qualified. The minimum qualification for an employee to be classified as level one shall be a Child Development Associate Credential or a one-year certificate or diploma in early childhood education or child development. The classification system shall be used for purposes of the tax credit granted in section 5 of this act.

Sec. 10. Section 77-2715.07, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2015, is amended to read:
77-2715.07 (1) There shall be allowed to qualified resident individuals as a nonrefundable credit against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967:
(a) A credit equal to the federal credit allowed under section 22 of the Internal Revenue Code; and
(b) A credit for taxes paid to another state as provided in section 77-2730.
(2) There shall be allowed to qualified resident individuals against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967:
(a) For returns filed reporting federal adjusted gross incomes of greater than twenty-nine thousand dollars, a nonrefundable credit equal to twenty-five percent of the federal credit allowable under section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, except that for taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2015, such nonrefundable credit shall be allowed only if the individual would have received the federal credit allowed under section 21 of the code after adding back in any carryforward of a net operating loss that was deducted pursuant to such section in determining eligibility for the federal credit;
(b) For returns filed reporting federal adjusted gross income of twenty-nine thousand dollars or less, a refundable credit equal to a percentage of the federal credit allowable under section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or not limited by the federal tax liability. The percentage of the federal credit shall be one hundred percent for incomes not greater than twenty-two thousand dollars, and the percentage shall be reduced by ten percent for each one thousand dollars, or fraction thereof, by which the reported federal adjusted gross income exceeds twenty-two thousand dollars, except that for taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2016, such refundable credit shall be allowed only if the individual would have received the federal credit allowed under section 21 of the code after adding back in any carryforward of a net operating loss that was deducted pursuant to such section in determining eligibility for the federal credit;
(c) A refundable credit as provided in section 77-5209.01 for individuals who qualify for an income tax credit as a qualified beginning farmer or livestock producer under the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Act for all taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2006, under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1986, as amended;
(d) A refundable credit for individuals who qualify for an income tax credit under the Angel Investment Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act, or the Nebraska Advantage Research and
Development Act; and
(e) A refundable credit equal to ten percent of the federal credit allowed under section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, except that for taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2015, such refundable credit shall be allowed only if the individual would have received the federal credit allowed under section 32 of the code after adding back in any carryforward of a net operating loss that was deducted pursuant to such section in determining eligibility for the federal credit.

(3) There shall be allowed to all individuals as a nonrefundable credit against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967:
(a) A credit for personal exemptions allowed under section 77-2716.01;
(b) A credit for contributions to certified community betterment programs as provided in the Community Development Assistance Act. Each partner, or the shareholder of an electing subchapter S corporation, each member, or each beneficiary of a partnership, subchapter S corporation, estate, trust, or limited liability company, or a financial institution.
(c) A credit for investment in a biodiesel facility as provided in section 77-27,236;
(d) A credit as provided in the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act; and
(e) A credit as provided in the Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act.

(4) There shall be allowed as a credit against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967:
(a) A credit to all resident estates and trusts for taxes paid to another state as provided in section 77-2736;
(b) A credit to all estates and trusts for contributions to certified community betterment programs as provided in the Community Development Assistance Act; and
(c) A refundable credit for individuals who qualify for an income tax credit as an owner of agricultural assets under the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Act for all taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2009, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. To be allowed for each partner, shareholder, member, or beneficiary of a partnership, corporation, limited liability company, or estate or trust qualifying for an income tax credit as an owner of agricultural assets under the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Act shall be equal to the partner's, shareholder's, member's, or beneficiary's portion of the amount of franchise tax paid to the state under sections 77-3801 to 77-3807 by a financial institution.

(5)(a) For all taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2007, and before January 1, 2009, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, there shall be allowed to each partner, shareholder, member, or beneficiary of a partnership, subchapter S corporation, limited liability company, or estate or trust a nonrefundable credit against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 equal to fifty percent of the partner's, shareholder's, member's, or beneficiary's portion of the amount of franchise tax paid to the state under sections 77-3801 to 77-3807 by a financial institution.

(b) For all taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2009, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, there shall be allowed to each partner, shareholder, member, or beneficiary of a partnership, subchapter S corporation, limited liability company, or estate or trust a nonrefundable credit against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 equal to the partner's, shareholder's, member's, or beneficiary's portion of the amount of franchise tax paid to the state under sections 77-3801 to 77-3807 by a financial institution.

(c) Each partner, shareholder, member, or beneficiary shall report his or her share of the credit in the same manner and proportion as he or she reports the partnership, subchapter S corporation, limited liability company, or estate or trust income. If any partner, shareholder, member, or beneficiary cannot fully utilize the credit for that year, the credit may not be carried forward or back.

(6) There shall be allowed to all individuals nonrefundable credits against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 as provided in this act against the income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 as provided in section 5 of this act.

Sec. 11. Section 77-2717, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014, is amended to read:
77-2717 (1)(a)(i) For taxable years beginning or deemed to begin before January 1, 2014, the tax imposed on all resident estates and trusts shall be a percentage of the federal alternative minimum tax and the federal tax on premature or lump-sum distributions from qualified retirement plans. The additional taxes shall be recomputed by (A) substituting Nebraska taxable income for federal taxable income, (B) calculating what the federal alternative minimum tax would be on Nebraska taxable income and adjusting such calculations for any items which are reflected differently in the determination of federal taxable income, and (C) applying Nebraska rates to the result. The federal credit for prior year minimum tax, after the recomputations required by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, and the credits provided in the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act and the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act shall be allowed as a reduction in the income tax due. A refundable income tax credit shall be allowed for all
trusts under the Angel Investment Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act, and the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act. A nonrefundable income tax credit shall be allowed for all resident estates and trusts as provided in the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act.

(ii) For taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2014, the tax imposed on all resident estates and trusts shall be a percentage of the federal taxable income of such estate and trust as modified in section 77-2716, plus a percentage of the federal tax on premature or lump-sum distributions from qualified retirement plans. The additional taxes shall be recomputed by substituting Nebraska taxable income for federal taxable income and applying Nebraska rates to the result. The credits provided in the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act and the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act shall be allowed as a reduction in the income tax due. A refundable income tax credit shall be allowed for all resident estates and trusts under the Angel Investment Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act, and the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act. A nonrefundable income tax credit shall be allowed for all resident estates and trusts as provided in the Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act, and the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act, and the School Readiness Tax Credit Act.

(b) The tax imposed on all nonresident estates and trusts shall be the portion of the tax imposed on resident estates and trusts which is attributable to income derived from sources within this state. The tax which is attributable to income derived from sources within this state shall be determined by multiplying the liability to this state for a resident estate or trust with the same total income by a fraction, the numerator of which is the nonresident estate's or trust's Nebraska income as determined by sections 77-2724 and 77-2725 and the denominator of which is its total federal income after first adjusting each by the amounts provided in section 77-2716. The federal credit for prior year minimum tax, after the recomputations required by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, reduced by the percentage of the total income which is attributable to income from sources outside this state, and the credits provided in the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act and the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act shall be allowed as a reduction in the income tax due. A refundable income tax credit shall be allowed for all nonresident estates and trusts under the Angel Investment Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act, and the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act. A nonrefundable income tax credit shall be allowed for all nonresident estates and trusts as provided in the Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act, and the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act, and the School Readiness Tax Credit Act.

(2) In all instances wherein a fiduciary income tax return is required under the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, a Nebraska fiduciary return shall be filed, except that a fiduciary return shall not be required to be filed regarding a simple trust if all of the trust's beneficiaries are residents of the State of Nebraska, all of whose income is derived from sources in this state, and the trust has no federal tax liability. The fiduciary shall be responsible for making the return for the estate or trust for the first time, with the income being allocable to the estate or trust, or to the beneficiaries thereof. The fiduciary shall include in the return a statement of each beneficiary's distributive share of net income when such income is taxable to such beneficiaries.

(3) The beneficiaries of such estate or trust who are residents of this state shall include their proportionate share of such estate's or trust's federal income and shall reduce their Nebraska tax liability by their proportionate share of the credits as provided in the Angel Investment Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act, the Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act, and the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act, and the School Readiness Tax Credit Act. There shall be allowed to a beneficiary a refundable income tax credit under the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Act for all taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2001, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(4) If any beneficiary of such estate or trust is a nonresident during any part of the estate's or trust's taxable year, he or she shall file a Nebraska income tax return which shall include (a) in Nebraska adjusted gross income that portion of the estate's or trust's Nebraska income, as determined under sections 77-2724 and 77-2725, allocable to his or her interest in the estate or trust and (b) a reduction of the Nebraska tax liability by his or her proportionate share of the credits as provided in the Angel Investment Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act, the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act, the Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act, and the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act, and the School Readiness Tax Credit Act.

(5) In the absence of the nonresident beneficiary's executed agreement being attached to the Nebraska fiduciary return, the estate or trust shall remit a portion of such beneficiary's income which was derived from or
attributable to Nebraska sources with its Nebraska return for the taxable year. For taxable years beginning or deemed to begin before January 1, 2013, the amount of remittance, in such instance, shall be the highest individual income tax rate determined under section 77-2715.02 multiplied by the nonresident beneficiary's share of the estate or trust income which was derived from or attributable to sources within this state. For taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2013, the amount of remittance, in such instance, shall be the highest individual income tax rate determined under section 77-2715.03 multiplied by the nonresident beneficiary's share of the estate or trust income which was derived from or attributable to sources within this state. The amount remitted shall be allowed as a credit against the Nebraska income tax liability of the beneficiary.

(6) The Tax Commissioner may allow a nonresident beneficiary to not file a Nebraska income tax return if the nonresident beneficiary's only source of Nebraska income was his or her share of the estate's or trust's income which was derived from or attributable to sources within this state, the nonresident did not file an agreement to file a Nebraska income tax return, and the estate or trust has remitted the amount required by subsection (5) of this section on behalf of such nonresident beneficiary. The amount remitted shall be retained in satisfaction of the Nebraska income tax liability of the nonresident beneficiary.

(7) For purposes of this section, unless the context otherwise requires, simple trust shall mean any trust instrument which (a) requires that all income shall be distributed currently to the beneficiaries, (b) does not allow amounts to be paid, permanently set aside, or used in the tax year for charitable purposes, and (c) does not distribute amounts allocated in the corpus of the trust. Any trust which does not qualify as a simple trust shall be deemed a complex trust.

(8) For purposes of this section, any beneficiary of an estate or trust that is a grantor trust of a nonresident shall be disregarded and this section shall apply as though the nonresident grantor was the beneficiary.

Sec. 12. Section 77-2734.03, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014, is amended to read:

77-2734.03 (1)(a) For taxable years commencing prior to January 1, 1997, any (i) insurer paying a tax on premiums and assessments pursuant to section 77-908 or 81-523, (ii) electric cooperative organized under the Joint Public Power Authority Act, or (iii) credit union shall be credited, in the computation of the tax due under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, with the amount paid during the taxable year as taxes on such premiums and assessments and taxes in lieu of intangible tax.

(b) For taxable years commencing on or after January 1, 1997, any insurer paying a tax on premiums and assessments pursuant to section 77-908 or 81-523, any electric cooperative organized under the Joint Public Power Authority Act, or any credit union shall be credited, in the computation of the tax due under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, with the amount paid during the taxable year as (i) taxes on such premiums and assessments included as Nebraska premiums and assessments under section 77-2734.05 and (ii) taxes in lieu of intangible tax.

(c) For taxable years commencing or deemed to commence prior to, on, or after January 1, 1998, any insurer paying a tax on premiums and assessments pursuant to section 77-908 or 81-523 shall be credited, in the computation of the tax due under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, with the amount paid during the taxable year as assessments allowed as an offset against premium and related retaliatory tax liability pursuant to section 44-4233.

(2) There shall be allowed to corporate taxpayers a tax credit for contributions to community betterment programs as provided in the Community Development Assistance Act.

(3) There shall be allowed to corporate taxpayers a refundable income tax credit under the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Act for all taxable years beginning or deemed to begin on or after January 1, 2001, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(4) The changes made to this section by Laws 2004, LB 983, apply to motor fuels purchased during any tax year ending or deemed to end on or after January 1, 2005, under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

(5) There shall be allowed to corporate taxpayers refundable income tax credits under the Nebraska Advantage Microenterprise Tax Credit Act and the Nebraska Advantage Research and Development Act.

(6) There shall be allowed to corporate taxpayers a nonrefundable income tax credit for investment in a biodiesel facility as provided in section 77-27,236.

(7) There shall be allowed to corporate taxpayers a nonrefundable income tax credit as provided in the Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act, and the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act, and the School Readiness Tax Credit Act.

Sec. 13. Original sections 77-2717 and 77-2734.03, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2014, and sections 68-1281, 71-1962, and 77-2715.07, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2015, are repealed.