

By Representative C. Smith

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to prevocational education and
3 job placement programs; providing a short
4 title; providing legislative findings;
5 providing definitions; authorizing the
6 Department of Labor and Employment Security to
7 provide grants to counties to implement
8 enhanced prevocational training and job
9 placement programs for certain purposes;
10 providing for grant applications; requiring a
11 county plan in a grant application; requiring
12 counties receiving grants to provide financial
13 assistance to certain community-based
14 organizations and faith-based organizations for
15 certain purposes; specifying use of grant
16 funds; specifying criteria for individual
17 eligibility for prevocational training;
18 providing for prevocational training and job
19 placement for welfare recipients and
20 incarcerated persons; providing limitations;
21 prohibiting fees for program services;
22 providing for coordination with local private
23 sector businesses; requiring the department to
24 monitor the effectiveness of prevocational
25 training programs; authorizing the department
26 to adopt rules; providing an effective date.

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28 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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30 Section 1. Short title.--This act may be cited as the
31 "Job Preparation and Retention Training Act of 2000."

1 Section 2. Findings.--The Legislature finds that:
2 (1) Training programs carried out under the Job
3 Training Partnership Act, 29 U.S.C. 1501 et seq., that include
4 a prevocational component have had placement success rates
5 that are better than the success rates of programs under that
6 act that lack that component.
7 (2) A need exists for skills training to enable
8 individuals who are welfare recipients to make transitions
9 into unsubsidized employment that provides career potential
10 and enables the individuals to achieve economic
11 self-sufficiency.
12 (3) Current federal and state law do not adequately
13 address the tremendously deleterious effect of unfavorable
14 environmental and cultural factors on the ability of such
15 individuals to obtain and retain gainful employment.
16 (4) A need exists for a state commitment to the
17 development of prevocational training programs that focus on:
18 (a) Improving the job readiness of individuals who are
19 welfare recipients.
20 (b) Preparing the individuals psychologically and
21 attitudinally for employment.
22 (c) Teaching the individuals learning and other
23 appropriate skills.
24 (d) Placing the individuals in:
25 1. Permanent unsubsidized employment; or
26 2. Skill training centers and, on completion of the
27 skill training, in permanent unsubsidized employment.
28 (5) Community-based organizations and faith-based
29 organizations:
30 (a) Have provided such prevocational training programs
31 to disadvantaged populations, with demonstrable success.

1 (b) Should receive additional state assistance to
2 enable the organizations to enhance the ability of the
3 organizations to provide the training programs in communities
4 with large populations of welfare recipients and enable the
5 organizations to provide the training programs to additional
6 welfare recipients.

7 Section 3. Definitions.--For purposes of this act:

8 (1) "Department" means the Department of Labor and
9 Employment Security.

10 (2) "Welfare recipient" means an individual receiving
11 assistance under a state program funded under part A of title
12 IV of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.

13 (3) "Welfare transition program" means a vocational
14 training program conducted by or at the direction of a county
15 as part of a state program described in subsection (2).

16 Section 4. Grants to counties.--

17 (1) GRANTS.--

18 (a) The department may make grants to counties to
19 enable the counties to assist community-based organizations
20 and faith-based organizations in implementing enhanced
21 prevocational training programs for eligible individuals.

22 (b) The department shall make the grants for periods
23 of 1 year.

24 (2) COUNTY PLANS.--To be eligible to receive a grant
25 under this section, a county shall submit an application to
26 the department at such time, in such manner, and containing
27 such information as the department may require. At a minimum,
28 the application shall contain:

29 (a) A county plan describing the prevocational
30 training programs to be carried out in the county with funds
31 made available through the grant.

1 (b) In particular, information describing the manner
2 in which the county will ensure that an appropriate
3 community-based organization in the county will carry out a
4 prevocational training program for incarcerated persons
5 described in section 5(2)(b)2., in accordance with section
6 5(2)(c)2.

7 (3) AWARD OF GRANTS.--In awarding grants under this
8 section, the department shall take into consideration the
9 needs of economically distressed urban and rural areas in the
10 counties, as determined by the department.

11 Section 5. Assistance to community-based organizations
12 and faith-based organizations.--

13 (1) ASSISTANCE.--

14 (a) A county that receives a grant under section 4
15 shall use the funds made available through the grant to
16 provide financial assistance to community-based organizations
17 and faith-based organizations, to enable the organizations to
18 implement the prevocational training programs referred to in
19 section 4.

20 (b) The county shall make the assistance for periods
21 of 1 year.

22 (2) USE OF FUNDS.--

23 (a) A community-based organization or faith-based
24 organization that receives financial assistance under this
25 section shall use the assistance to implement a prevocational
26 training program, through which the organization shall provide
27 prevocational training and placement services to eligible
28 individuals.

29 (b) To be eligible to receive services through a
30 prevocational training program under this act, an individual
31 shall:

- 1 1. Be a welfare recipient who:
2 a. Is enrolled in a welfare transition program; or
3 b. Is eligible to be enrolled in, but has not
4 participated in, a welfare transition program; or
5 2. Be a person who is incarcerated in a state or local
6 prison, and will be released from the prison within a
7 reasonable period, as defined by rule by the department.
8 (c)1. An organization selected by a county to
9 implement a prevocational training program for eligible
10 individuals described in subparagraph (b)1. shall:
11 a. Provide prevocational training, through job
12 training centers, designed to:
13 (I) As quickly as practicable, enable the individuals
14 to overcome the effects of inadequate educational preparation
15 and unfavorable environmental and cultural factors, in order
16 to prepare the individuals for employment.
17 (II) Improve the job readiness of the individuals.
18 (III) Prepare the individuals psychologically and
19 attitudinally for employment.
20 (IV) Enable the individuals to develop: learning
21 skills; communication and computational skills; punctuality,
22 health, and personal maintenance skills; job-seeking skills,
23 including interviewing skills; basic literacy; skills required
24 for receipt of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent;
25 professionalism; and responsiveness for authority.
26 b. On completion of the prevocational training, place
27 the individuals in:
28 (I) Permanent unsubsidized employment; or
29 (II) Skill training centers that provide superior
30 skill training for positions that are quickly obtainable and,
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1 on completion of the skill training, in permanent unsubsidized
2 employment.

3 2. An organization selected by a county to implement a
4 prevocational training program for eligible individuals
5 described in subparagraph (b)2. shall provide the
6 prevocational training described in sub-subparagraph 1.a. in
7 the state or local prison involved and provide the placement
8 services described in sub-sub-subparagraph 1.b.(II).

9 (d) The organization shall provide not less than 2
10 weeks and not more than 3 months of prevocational training to
11 an eligible individual through the program. The organization
12 shall not provide more than \$1,200 in services under the
13 program to an eligible individual.

14 (e) No organization may charge a fee to an eligible
15 individual for services under the program if the individual is
16 a citizen or resident alien.

17 (f) A community-based organization providing placement
18 services under this subsection shall coordinate the services
19 with the efforts of local private sector businesses to create
20 jobs and employment opportunities.

21 (3) APPLICATIONS.--To be eligible to receive financial
22 assistance under this section, a community-based organization
23 or faith-based organization shall submit an application to the
24 county at such time, in such manner, and containing such
25 information as the department may require.

26 Section 6. Monitoring.--

27 (1) The department shall monitor the effectiveness of
28 programs carried out under this act by collecting information
29 on:

30 (a) The percentage of program participants who are
31 placed in employment after participation in the program.

1 (b) The percentage of the participants who are
2 retained in employment after participation in the program.

3 (c) The economic impact of the employment of the
4 participants.

5 (2) The department shall adopt any rule necessary to
6 implement the provisions of this act.

7 Section 7. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
8 law.

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11 HOUSE SUMMARY

12 Authorizes the Department of Labor and Employment
13 Security to provide grants to counties to provide
14 financial assistance to community-based organizations and
15 faith-based organizations to implement enhanced
16 prevocational training and job placement programs, in
17 order to improve the likelihood of enabling welfare
18 recipients and incarcerated persons to make transitions
19 from public assistance to employment. See bill for
20 details.

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