
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BRIDGE TO HOPE PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the recent changes
2 to the rules of the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy
3 Families (TANF) program, which prohibit baccalaureate education
4 as countable work activities and limits educational activities
5 to one year of vocational education are not consistent with the
6 State's intention to include education and training as one of
7 the pathways to economic self-sufficiency. The department of
8 human services has implemented an expanded education policy for
9 first-to-work participants, but this statute, which creates the
10 bridge to hope education program, only mentions TANF families.
11 Currently, Temporary Assistance to Other Needy Families
12 participants use the expanded education options due to the
13 recent federal limitations on educational activities.

14 In July 2000, the legislature enacted the bridge to hope
15 post-secondary education benefits program within the department
16 of human services, and affirmed the State's support for access
17 to post-secondary education by participants in the federally



1 funded TANF welfare program. Heads of households often require
2 additional skills and knowledge to increase their earning
3 capacity to enable them to earn a self-sufficient wage. Since
4 July 2001, the bridge to hope student employment and academic
5 support at the University of Hawaii has served over 600
6 individuals with 150 of those individuals earning their
7 associate of arts and 70 others earning their bachelor of arts.

8 The purpose of this Act is to clarify eligibility
9 requirements of and expand the bridge to hope program to enable
10 all heads of households who are receiving financial assistance
11 and participating in the first-to-work program to pursue a full
12 range of educational activities as part of their work
13 activities.

14 SECTION 2. Section 346-68, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by amending subsections (a) and (b) to read as follows:

16 "(a) There is created within the department a post-
17 secondary education benefits program, to be known as the bridge
18 to hope program, for heads of households in the [~~temporary~~
19 ~~assistance to needy families~~] first-to-work program.

20 (b) To receive assistance under this program, the [~~single~~
21 ~~parent~~] participant shall:



- 1 (1) Be enrolled as a student each term[~~r~~] in an approved
2 course of study, including vocational education;
3 (2) Maintain passing grades or better throughout the
4 course of study; and
5 (3) Meet work activity requirements as defined by the
6 department."

7 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
8 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.



Report Title:

Bridge to Hope Program; TANF

Description:

Expands the Bridge to Hope Program to enable all heads of households receiving financial assistance and participating in the First-to-Work Program to pursue education beyond the federal limit of one-year of vocational education. (HB2770 HD1)

