
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 program, which prohibit baccalaureate education as
4 countable work activities and limit educational activities to
5 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 temporary
11 assistance for needy families. Currently, temporary assistance
12 to other needy families participants use the expanded education
13 options due to the recent federal limitations on educational
14 activities.

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



1 to post-secondary education by participants in the federally
2 funded temporary assistance for needy families welfare program.
3 Heads of households often require additional skills and
4 knowledge to increase their earning capacity to enable them to
5 earn a self-sufficient wage. Since July 2001, the bridge to
6 hope student employment and academic support program at the
7 University of Hawaii has served over six hundred individuals
8 with one hundred fifty of those individuals earning their
9 associate of arts degrees and seventy others earning their
10 bachelor of arts degrees.

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

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

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



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

3 (1) Be enrolled as a student each term[+] in an approved
4 course of study including, but not limited to,
5 vocational education;

6 (2) Maintain passing grades or better throughout the
7 course of study; and

8 (3) Meet work activity requirements as defined by the
9 department."

10 SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
11 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

12 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. (SD1)

