
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 to Needy
3 Families (TANF) program that prohibit baccalaureate education as
4 countable work activities and limits educational activities to
5 one year of vocational education, are inconsistent 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, pursuant to a statute that mentions
10 only TANF recipient families. Currently, Temporary Assistance
11 to Other Needy Families (TAONF) participants use the expanded
12 education options due to the recent federal limitations on
13 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 have served over six hundred
6 individuals, with one hundred fifty of those individuals earning
7 their associate of arts degree and seventy others earning their
8 bachelor of arts degree.

9 The purpose of this Act is to modify the eligibility
10 requirements of and expand the bridge to hope program to enable
11 all heads of households who are participating in the first-to-
12 work program to pursue a full range of educational activities as
13 part of their work 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[+] in an approved
- 2 course of study including, but not limited to,
- 3 vocational education;
- 4 (2) Maintain passing grades or better throughout the
- 5 course of study; and
- 6 (3) Meet work activity requirements as defined by the
- 7 department."

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 Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed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

10 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 household in the first-to-work program to pursue education beyond the federal limit of one year of vocational education.
(SD1)

