



LATE

To: The Honorable Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair
The Honorable Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice-Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

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Subject: IHS Testimony in Support of HB713-HD1 with Proposed Amendments

Aloha Senate Committee Members,

Since 2010, IHS has operated a comprehensive homeless employment program that achieves the following objectives:

1. Conduct thorough assessments that identifies barriers that prevent a homeless person from obtaining and accessing part-time or full-time employment;
2. Facilitate pre-vocational and vocational rehabilitation for homeless person's needing to redevelop job-basics, such as showing up on time, team-building skills, communication-skills, following through on work responsibilities, etc.;
3. Facilitate job matching and placement based on the client's skills, background and interests (this also requires employer outreach);
4. Continue to provide Case Management for homeless obtaining jobs, while transitioning from homelessness to housing where destabilization may risk someone retaining employment;
5. Support clients with basic needs, such as transportation bus vouchers, purchasing of supplies, uniforms or clothing to access and prepare for job functions, assisting with legal and other fees that prevent clients from obtaining employment, and assisting employers with costly background checks and screenings;
6. Educate clients with financial literacy basics, such as savings, credit scores, money management, etc.

IHS' homeless employment program also engages clients with payment of jobs for work done, similar to the proposed legislation. However, IHS is only able to do so through subcontracting a private staffing agency that obtains the risk and insurance of hiring employees.

Through our program and services, IHS has successfully assisted 5,028 homeless individuals with obtaining jobs over the past 9-years. Programs are funded through private donors. However, we believe that our model should be sustained long-term through government funded programs that align with the Federal Workforce Improvement and Opportunity Act (WIOA).





Page 2:

With that said, IHS proposes the following amendments to this bill:

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1. Under Section 2 (b)- amend the language of the bill to allow for subcontract services by a homeless provider. The section would read as follows:

“The department of human services shall contract with a service provider or other qualified person or entity to administer the program; provided that the contract shall be exempt from chapter 103D and 103F, Hawaii Revised Statutes.”

This would allow a homeless service provider to avoid the risk and insurance needed to hire homeless clients.

2. Under Section 2 (c)- include new objectives that comprehensively assists a homeless person with developing job skills and obtaining employment opportunities. The section would read as follows:

“The homeless employment grant program shall:

- (1) Conducts an assessment to ensure screening for employment barriers, income, skills and desires are screened for;
- (2) Connect homeless individuals with work opportunities;
- (3) Pay individuals in the program for the hours they worked in the day, which may include a limited amount of time spent with service providers provided that the source of the funding for the payments shall be the homeless employment program’s funds;
- (4) Assist homeless individuals with shallow funding assistance to remove barriers that obtain employment, which may include a limited amount of funds and provided that the source of the funding for payments shall be the homeless employment program’s funds;
- (5) ~~Connect homeless individuals with service providers at the appropriate time~~
Coordinate with homeless outreach, shelter and case management services to ensure clients being served are part of the State’s Coordinated Entry System and can access permanent housing resources;
- (6) When appropriate, transport participants in the program to a shelter at the end of the work day;
- (7) Conduct trainings for financial literacy skills that are necessary to manage money and develop long-term self-sufficiency.





Page 3:

Passage of this bill with the proposed amendments will help the State of Hawaii achieve the following:

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1. It will help to ensure the State has the data and information required to properly assess the viability of the pilot program;
2. It will ensure that the program goals remain housing-focused and that the clients accesses the Coordinated Entry System;
3. Provides the homeless provider with necessary resources that removes actual barriers that often prevent homeless clients with obtaining work;
4. Allow the contracted agency to subcontract help where needed;
5. Builds on the lessons learned from the Albuquerque, New Mexico where a large percentage who utilized the program obtained short-term funds to engage in illegal activity and behaviors. This bill would rather ensure that financial literacy counters bad behaviors and engagement with drugs or alcoholism, both of which sustain a person's homelessness if identified as barriers to obtaining employment and housing; and
6. Supports the State's existing efforts to coordinate with shelters, outreach and case management services so that funds are spend efficiently and effectively by avoiding duplication of services between multiple stakeholders.

As a member of the Hawaii Workforce Development Council, our Executive Director, Connie Mitchell is committed to helping develop avenues for returning, displaced and homeless workers to the workforce. Pre-vocational and vocational rehabilitation with a financial incentive will certainly help enhance the homeless person's potential for achieving employment, which in turn leads to more housing options. Regular paid employment also affords the homeless individual the ability to plan their finances and become eligible for subsidized housing in many areas.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kimo K. Carvalho
Community Relations Director
IHS, The Institute for Human Services, Inc.



HB-713-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2019 11:54:26 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/11/2019 2:45:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brett Kulbis	Testifying for Honolulu County Republican Party	Support	No

Comments: