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S.B. NO. 1520-84

A Bill for an Act Relating to a Statewide Transition to Work System.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that because many students, upon leaving high school, are poorly prepared to enter the job market, special preparation to assist in the transition from school to work is needed. All students need varying degrees of assistance as they begin the complex process of career decision-making and attempt to master job-seeking and job-keeping skills.

In addition, there are many high school students in the State whose ability to make career and employment decisions is impeded by poor health, limited psycho-social well-being, and diminished productive capacity. Often these students reside in communities characterized by high rates of school absenteeism, unemployment, and poverty, and they may lack access to traditional support systems of family, school, and church. Unless assisted through a planned system of coordinated services, they will continue to lack trust in the environment, have poor self-esteem, lack personal and career goals, and experience difficulty in realizing their full potential.

The legislature therefore finds that a unified but flexible system of transition services is necessary to meet the basic career and employment needs of all students as they move from school to work. This system should include services such as counseling, career information, career exploration activities, work experience, employment assistance, and other services necessary to prepare individuals to make career and employment decisions. Such a system also must

operate with the recognition that social, economic, or health problems must be overcome before career and employment planning can take place. The legislature further finds that the effective use of resources and provision of services can best be met by a collaborative effort between educators, human services personnel, and labor market experts.

The legislature finds that the career resource centers of the department of labor and industrial relations have demonstrated an ability to assist students of Kaimuki and Waialua high schools in the areas of career and employment counseling, career information, and occupational exploration. The career resource centers have helped individuals better assess themselves, research occupations, set realistic career goals, and develop job-seeking and job-keeping skills.

The legislature also finds that the quick kokua program of the department of labor and industrial relations has effectively met the needs of Farrington and Waianae high school students by providing on-campus career and employment counseling as well as health and social services in a preventive, caring, and organized manner. Quick kokua has better enabled the targeted youths effectively to identify and address their multiple and complex problems, to cope with changing situations, and to make realistic and responsible decisions about their lives and careers.

The legislature further finds that there is a need to link these various program models into a single inter-agency system that will allow service flexibility and program variation as it addresses the basic career and employment planning needs of all students. Such a linkage will ensure the development of a concerted effort, maximum resource usage, and improved coordination of the overall planning and delivery of transition services.

The purpose of this Act, therefore, is to establish a unified system of transition centers initially including the quick kokua and career resource center programs.

SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

“CHAPTER STATEWIDE TRANSITION TO WORK SYSTEM

§ -1 **Findings and purpose.** There is general consensus that all students require varying degrees of assistance in realistically planning for their future careers and lives. It is further recognized that unless these individuals are assisted in making the transition from adolescence to adulthood at whatever level they begin, repeated discouraging experiences may result in poor self-esteem and negative attitudes and may lead to years of indecision and unrealized potential.

The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to provide for the establishment within the department of labor and industrial relations of a coordinated system of transition to work centers. This system will incorporate the quick kokua program with that of the career resource centers to develop a comprehensive and flexible spectrum of services capable of addressing the unique needs of the State's high school students.

§ -2 **Transition center system; establishment.** There is established a statewide transition to work system in the department of labor and industrial relations, to be known as the transition center system, consisting of but not limited to the quick kokua program and the career resource centers presently established within the department of labor and industrial relations. Transition centers shall be established and maintained based on equitable consideration of the State's urban, rural, and neighbor island needs.

§ -3 **Powers and duties.** The transition center system shall be responsible for the continued delivery of the integrated on-campus services formerly provided by the quick kokua program and career resource centers. These services shall include career, employment, social, and health counseling and assistance as appropriate, and shall be directed at assisting designated high school students in successfully completing the transition from school to work or to further training and education."

SECTION 3. All employees currently assigned to the quick kokua program or career resource centers shall be transferred to the transition center system established by this Act without regard to chapters 76 and 77, Hawaii Revised Statutes; provided that employees assigned to the quick kokua program and detached from the department of education or the department of health, and the respective positions they occupy, shall remain with and not be transferred from their respective departments.

SECTION 4. The department of labor and industrial relations may establish positions and hire necessary personnel for the purposes of this chapter without regard to chapters 76 and 77, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

SECTION 5. The field or program operations under the system established by this Act shall continue to be located on the campuses of the high schools being served by the quick kokua program and the career resource center program immediately prior to the effective date of this Act; provided that each of the schools or other sites at which the program is implemented in the future shall provide a physical facility which is optimally located or readily accessible to clients and other support; and provided further that the physical facility and support shall be without charge.

SECTION 6. All funds, appropriations, records, equipment, machines, files, supplies, contracts, books, papers, documents, maps, and other personal

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property made, used, acquired, or held by the department of labor and industrial relations, department of education, and department of health relating to the quick kokua program or to the career resource center program shall be transferred to the transition center system with the functions to which they relate; provided that any of these items, including but not limited to funds and personnel records held by the department of health or the department of education in connection with the employees employed by those respective departments but on detached assignment to the quick kokua program immediately prior to the effective date of this Act, shall be retained by those respective departments as necessary to effectuate the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 7. The director of the department of labor and industrial relations shall prepare and submit to the legislature, prior to the regular session of 1985, a report on the status and progress of the transition center system, including any problems encountered in establishing the program as required by this Act, estimates of future program costs and alternative methods of delivery, and any recommendations requiring legislative action necessary to complete the implementation of the intent and purposes of this Act.

SECTION 8. Part IX of chapter 362, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is repealed.

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

(Approved April 18, 1984.)