

JAN 23 2017

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

ENCOURAGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES MED-QUEST DIVISION
TO IMPLEMENT AN INCOME DISREGARD PROGRAM FOR WORKERS WITH
DISABILITIES.

1 WHEREAS, although some individuals may live with
2 significant disabilities and severe health conditions that
3 preclude employment, millions of individuals with disabilities
4 can and do work; and
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6 WHEREAS, although considerable progress has been made over
7 the past several decades to remove barriers to employment for
8 individuals with disabilities, additional challenges remain for
9 individuals with disabilities who wish to remain in the
10 workforce; and
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12 WHEREAS, individuals with disabilities face higher rates of
13 unemployment and poverty than individuals without disabilities;
14 and
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16 WHEREAS, according to the United States Bureau of Labor
17 Statistics, in 2015, 17.5 percent of persons with a disability
18 were employed, compared to 65 percent of persons without a
19 disability; and
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21 WHEREAS, furthermore, the unemployment rate for persons
22 with a disability was estimated at 10.7 percent in 2015,
23 compared to 5.1 percent for persons without a disability; and
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25 WHEREAS, in 2014, 28.2 percent of working age individuals
26 with a disability lived in poverty, compared to a poverty rate
27 of 13 percent for working age individuals without a disability;
28 and
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30 WHEREAS, although working age adults with disabilities need
31 adequate health insurance to enter or remain in the work force,
32 their health insurance options may be limited; and



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 2 WHEREAS, to retain Medicaid coverage, workers with
 3 disabilities often must limit their income and assets to poverty
 4 levels; and

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 6 WHEREAS, individuals with disabilities possess the skills
 7 and talent to support themselves through meaningful employment
 8 and make important contributions within the nation's workplaces;
 9 however, additional progress must be made to promote the
 10 employment of persons with disabilities; and

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 12 WHEREAS, establishing an income disregard program in the
 13 Med-QUEST Division of the Department of Human Services would
 14 allow Medicaid recipients with disabilities to earn more than
 15 would otherwise be possible, while still retaining the Medicaid
 16 coverage and services these individuals need to successfully
 17 live in the community; and

18
 19 WHEREAS, an income disregard program for persons with
 20 disabilities would also enable individuals with disabilities to
 21 seek or maintain gainful employment and enjoy more fulfilling,
 22 productive lives; now, therefore,

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 24 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth
 25 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the
 26 House of Representatives concurring, that the Med-QUEST Division
 27 of the Department of Human Services is encouraged to implement
 28 an income disregard program that will enable workers with
 29 disabilities to seek or maintain employment, while also
 30 retaining necessary Medicaid benefits and supports; and

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 32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 33 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human
 34 Services and Administrator of the Med-QUEST Division, Department
 35 of Human Services.

OFFERED BY:

Kal Rhoads

Michelle

SP Service

John



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~~SC 1000~~
Bureau of
James Mercado

