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Resolve, To Create Improved Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities

Sec. A-1 Interdepartmental committee. Resolved: That the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor shall establish an interdepartmental committee, referred to in this Part as "the committee," to develop a statewide transition plan to facilitate the implementation of a waiver allowing the expansion of supported employment as an alternative for people with developmental disabilities who are currently receiving freestanding day habilitation through MaineCare.

1. The plan developed by the committee must include:

A. An information campaign about employment and the changing practices and expectations for employment;

B. Instruction on how to pursue and maintain gainful employment in integrated settings in the community and how to seek employment supports, including but not limited to benefits counseling;

C. Training for provider agencies on ways to build capacity to support individuals with developmental disabilities in competitive and gainful employment, including self-employment; and

D. Training for the Department of Health and Human Services staff and the Department of Labor staff to implement the transition.

2. The committee shall submit its plan to the Joint Standing Committee on Labor no later than January 15, 2008; and be it further

Sec. A-2 Stakeholder committee. Resolved: That the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor shall establish a stakeholder group, referred to in this Part as "the group," to design and implement a system of community services using existing resources that supports the attainment by persons with developmental disabilities of gainful employment in integrated settings in the community.

1. The group must include representatives of employers, service providers, consumers, consumer advocates, educators, community advocacy organizations and the University of Maine's Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies and representatives of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor and the Department of Education.

2. The system designed by the group must include:

A. A funding formula that provides incentives to providers to facilitate the attainment of employment by persons with developmental disabilities;

B. A plan that invests in professional development and capacity building for provider agencies, including state agencies and case managers; and

C. A tracking system that facilitates an annual report by the Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor matters regarding the number of individuals employed, the wages of individuals employed and the contributions in taxes resulting from such employment.

3. The group shall propose guidelines for the best practices in supported employment, to be incorporated into contracts with provider agencies by July 1, 2008.

4. The group shall submit its report to the Joint Standing Committee on Labor no later than January 15, 2008.

Sec. B-1 Public and Private Sector Task Force; creation. Resolved: That, in order to facilitate the development and implementation of a media outreach campaign that increases awareness and promotes the employment of Maine residents with disabilities, the Maine Jobs Council shall convene the Public and Private Sector Task Force, referred to in this Part as "the task force," to oversee the development of a professional strategic marketing plan by marketing professionals and to identify resources for employer outreach. In establishing the task force, the Maine Jobs Council shall invite the participation of government agencies, public and private sector employers and people with disabilities and their advocates. The Maine Jobs Council shall submit a report summarizing the work of the task force to the Joint Standing Committee on Labor no later than January 15, 2008; and be it further

Sec. B-2 Appropriations and allocations. Resolved: That the following appropriations and allocations are made.

LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF

Maine Jobs Council

Initiative: Provides funds to develop a strategic marketing plan and to identify resources for employer outreach.

GENERAL FUND	2007-08	2008-09
All Other	\$59,000	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$59,000	\$0

SUMMARY

This resolve implements the recommendations of the report issued pursuant to Public Law 2005, chapter 570.

This resolve directs the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor to create an interdepartmental committee to develop a statewide transition plan to facilitate the implementation of a waiver allowing the expansion of supported employment as an alternative for people with developmental disabilities who are currently receiving freestanding day habilitation through MaineCare.

This resolve also directs the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor to design and implement a system of community services using existing resources that supports the attainment by persons with developmental disabilities of gainful employment in integrated settings in the community.

Finally, this resolve directs the Maine Jobs Council to convene a task force to oversee the development of a professional strategic marketing plan by marketing professionals and to identify resources for employer outreach. This bill also appropriates funds to accomplish this task.