

HCS HB 1787 -- GUARD AT HOME PROGRAM (Jackson)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Job Creation and Economic Development

This substitute establishes the Guard at Home Program to assist the spouse of an active-duty national guardsman or reservist by addressing his or her immediate needs and employment in order to keep the family from falling into poverty while the primary income earner is on active duty and to help returning troops find work in situations where an individual needs to rebuild business clientele or where an individual's job was eliminated while on deployment.

The Department of Economic Development is required to hire a contractor to administer the program. The Division of Job Development and Training will ensure that the contractor meets certain qualifications specified in the substitute. The division will develop the criteria of the contract based on the following:

- (1) Eligible program participants will be families where:
 - (a) The primary income earner was called to active duty in defense of the United States for more than four months;
 - (b) The primary income is no longer available;
 - (c) The family is experiencing a significant hardship due to financial burdens; and
 - (d) The family has no outside resources available to assist with these hardships; and
- (2) Services may be provided to families in order to alleviate an immediate crisis and to provide economic stability while the primary income is not available due to the active military commitment. The substitute specifies some of the services which may be provided.

The department will report to the President Pro Tem of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the operation and progress of the program by January 1, 2007.

The substitute becomes effective on July 1, 2006, and the division must make every effort to ensure that participating families are being served by August 1, 2006.

The substitute contains an emergency clause.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.