

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 555

95TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES SMITH (14) (Sponsor),
ATKINS AND MUNZLINGER (Co-sponsors).

0187L.02I

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal section 620.515, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to the hero at home program.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 620.515, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 620.515, to read as follows:

620.515. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Hero at Home" program, the purpose of which is to:

(1) Assist the spouse of an active duty national guard or reserve component service member reservist to address immediate needs and employment in an attempt to keep the family from falling into poverty while the primary income earner is on active duty, and during the one-year period following discharge from deployment; and

(2) Assist returning national guard troops or reserve component service member reservists with finding work in situations where an individual needs to rebuild business clientele or where an individual's job has been eliminated while such individual was deployed, or where the individual otherwise cannot return to his or her previous employment.

2. Subject to appropriation, the department of economic development shall operate the hero at home program through existing programs or by entering into a contract with qualified providers through local workforce investment boards. Eligibility for the program shall be based on the following criteria:

(1) Eligible participants in the program shall be those families where:

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

- 16 (a) The primary income earner was called to active duty in defense of the United States
17 for a period of more than four months;
- 18 (b) The family's primary income is no longer available;
- 19 (c) The family is experiencing significant hardship due to financial burdens; and
- 20 (d) The family has no outside resources available to assist with such hardships;
- 21 (2) Services that may be provided to the family will be aimed at ameliorating the
22 immediate crisis and providing a path for economic stability while the primary income is not
23 available due to the active military commitment. Services shall be made available up to one year
24 following discharge from deployment. Services may include, but not be limited to the following:
- 25 (a) Financial assistance to families facing financial crisis from overdue bills [due to
26 reduced income after the deployment of a spouse];
- 27 (b) Help paying day care costs to pursue training and or employment;
- 28 (c) Help covering the costs of transportation to training and or employment;
- 29 (d) Vocational evaluation and vocational counseling to help the individual choose a
30 visible employment goal;
- 31 (e) Vocational training to acquire or upgrade skills needed to be marketable in the
32 workforce;
- 33 (f) Paid internships and subsidized employment to train on the job; and
- 34 (g) Job placement assistance for those who don't require skills training;
- 35 (3) The department shall ensure the eligible providers are:
- 36 (a) Community-based not-for-profit agencies which have significant experience in job
37 training, placement, and social services;
- 38 (b) Providers with extensive experience providing such services to veterans and
39 implementing contracts with veteran organizations such as the department of veteran affairs;
- 40 (c) Providers which have attained the distinction of being accredited through a national
41 accreditation body for training and or human services;
- 42 (d) Providers which are able to provide a twenty percent match to the program either
43 through indirect or direct expenditures; and
- 44 (e) Providers with experience in the regions targeted for the program.
- 45 3. The department shall structure any contract such that payment will be based on
46 delivering the services described in this section as well as performance to guarantee the greatest
47 possible effectiveness of the program.
- 48 4. Because of the important nature of this program to the health and welfare of
49 Missourians, this section shall become effective on July 1, 2006. The department shall make
50 every reasonable effort to ensure that the hero at home program is serving families by August 1,
51 2006.

52 5. The department shall prepare a report on the operations and progress of the program
53 to be delivered to the speaker of the house of representatives and the president pro tem of the
54 senate no later than January 1, [2007] **2010**.

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