SB464

151537-2

By Senators Figures, Irons, Beasley, Coleman, Smitherman, Dunn, Ross, Bussman, Hightower, Allen, Waggoner, Marsh, Smith, Blackwell, Pittman, Williams, Fielding, Taylor and Sanders

RFD: Children, Youth Affairs, and Human Resources

First Read: 18-APR-13
SYNOPSIS: This bill would require state programs and services to promote the employment of youth and adults with disabilities by coordinating and collaborating to ensure that state programs, policies, procedures, and funding support competitive, integrated employment.

This bill would authorize state agencies to adopt rules to implement the act.

This bill would not require any employer to give preference to hiring individuals with disabilities.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Establishing the Alabama Employment First Initiative Act to require state programs and services to promote competitive employment of individuals with disabilities in an integrated setting.
BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. This act shall be known and cited as the Alabama Employment First Initiative Act.

Section 2. For purposes of this act, the following terms shall having the following meanings:

(1) COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT. Employment by an individual with a disability in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting, and for which the individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled.

(2) INTEGRATED SETTING. With respect to an employment outcome, a setting typically found in the community in which applicants with disabilities or eligible individuals with disabilities interact with individuals without disabilities, other than individuals without disabilities who are providing services to those applicants or eligible individuals to the same extent that individuals without disabilities in comparable positions interact with other persons.

Section 3. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the State of Alabama that competitive and integrated employment shall be considered a first option when serving persons with disabilities of working age who seek to obtain employment. This policy applies to programs and services that
provide services and support to help obtain employment for persons with disabilities. All state agencies shall follow this policy and ensure that it is effectively implemented in their programs and services. Nothing in this act shall require, or be construed to require, any employer to give preference to hiring people with disabilities.

Section 4. (a) All state agencies shall coordinate efforts and shall collaborate within and among such agencies to ensure that state programs, policies, procedures, and funding support competitive and integrated employment of individuals with disabilities. All state agencies shall, whenever feasible, share data and information across systems in order to track progress toward full implementation of the act.

(b) State agencies are authorized to adopt rules to implement this act.

Section 5. The Alabama Department of Mental Health is designated as the lead agency for coordinating this initiative among the various state agencies.

Section 6. This act shall become effective on the first day of the third month following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.