

1 HB285
2 151537-3
3 By Representatives Hall, Tuggle, Patterson, Johnson (W), Wood,
4 Harper, McClurkin, Fincher, Scott, Moore (M), Laird, Bridges,
5 Melton, Givan, Boyd, Millican, Johnson (R), Robinson (J),
6 Black, Robinson (O), Coleman-Evans, Newton, Boothe, Hammon,
7 Bracy, Shiver, Jackson, Grimsley, Baker, Forte, Clarke,
8 Burdine, Ford and Morrow
9 RFD: State Government
10 First Read: 16-JAN-14

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8 SYNOPSIS: This bill would require state programs and
9 services to promote the employment of youth and
10 adults with disabilities by coordinating and
11 collaborating to ensure that state programs,
12 policies, procedures, and funding support
13 competitive, integrated employment.

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

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

19
20 A BILL
21 TO BE ENTITLED
22 AN ACT

23
24 Establishing the Jeff Ridgeway Alabama Employment
25 First Initiative Act to require state programs and services to
26 promote competitive employment of individuals with
27 disabilities in an integrated setting.

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

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

4 Section 2. For purposes of this act, the following
5 terms shall have the following meanings:

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

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

23 Section 3. It is hereby declared to be the policy of
24 the State of Alabama that competitive and integrated
25 employment shall be considered a first option when serving
26 persons with disabilities of working age who seek to obtain
27 employment. This policy applies to programs and services that

1 provide services and support to help obtain employment for
2 persons with disabilities. All state agencies shall follow
3 this policy and ensure that it is effectively implemented in
4 their programs and services. Nothing in this act shall
5 require, or be construed to require, any employer to give
6 preference to hiring people with disabilities.

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

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

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

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