

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1922

*As Reported By House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor*

Title: An act relating to employment services for homeless persons.

Brief Description: Providing employment services for homeless persons.

Sponsor(s): Representatives Roland, Winsley, Brekke, Leonard, Rasmussen and Anderson.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Commerce & Labor, March 5, 1991, DP.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE & LABOR**

Majority Report: *Do pass.* Signed by 11 members: Representatives Heavey, Chair; Cole, Vice Chair; Fuhrman, Ranking Minority Member; Lisk, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Franklin; Jones; R. King; O'Brien; Prentice; Vance; and Wilson.

Staff: Annette Thompson (786-7179).

Background: Several locally and privately funded organizations in Washington offer services to homeless persons who are seeking employment. Belltown, an employment services program for homeless persons in Seattle, is one example.

Belltown conducts job search training classes during which homeless people write a resume, practice interview techniques, and determine the valuable job skills they possess. The people may use a bank of phones to call potential employers and receive messages. Suitable work clothes, hair cuts, and facilities for personal hygiene are provided. Belltown supplies funding for bus passes, child care, and transitional housing. Additionally, the staff at Belltown packs lunches for the people once they begin a job.

Belltown receives funding from the city, the county, the federal government, and various community service

organizations. Belltown is housed, rent-free, by the Employment Security Department.

The Employment Security Department provides services to the unemployed through its job service centers. However, the State has no specific program to accommodate the needs of homeless persons who are employable, but who are unable to find a job because of personal circumstances.

Summary of Bill: A legislative finding is made that lack of a home, child care, transportation, and clothing prevents homeless persons from finding gainful employment. It is the policy of this State to address these needs by coordinating federal, state, and local services towards meeting these needs and providing employment for employable homeless persons.

In cooperation with other state agencies, the Employment Security Department is directed to provide homeless persons employment services including job skills training, child care, and transportation services. By July 1, 1992, the department must provide homeless outreach in at least five job service centers.

By January 1, 1993, the department must report to the Commerce and Labor Committees in the Senate and in the House of Representatives, on the progress of efforts required under the act.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Homeless people face a broad range of obstacles that prevent them from gaining employment. By removing these obstacles and giving these people a hand-up, the State can avoid giving them a hand-out in the future.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Judy Roland (in favor).