

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1556

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Labor & Workplace Standards

**Title:** An act relating to the creation of the opportunities for employment in hospitality grant.

**Brief Description:** Establishing the opportunities for employment in hospitality grant.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Mead, Van Werven, Sells, Lovick, Eslick and Jinkins.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Labor & Workplace Standards: 1/31/19, 2/7/19 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Creates the Opportunities for Employment in Hospitality grant program to increase the number of workers from targeted populations employed in the hospitality industry.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LABOR & WORKPLACE STANDARDS

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Sells, Chair; Chapman, Vice Chair; Mosbrucker, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson, Hoff and Ormsby.

**Staff:** Trudes Tango (786-7384).

**Background:**

The Employment Security Department (ESD) administers the unemployment insurance program for the state, provides job training and assistance for jobseekers and employers, and generally administers programs, grants, and other resources related to state employment services.

In 2017 the ESD, WorkSource, the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the Washington Hospitality Association, and other entities in the workforce system hosted a hiring event for hospitality

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positions in King County. In addition to the hiring event, the coalition of entities provided additional resources to workers to stay employed, such as assistance with transportation, food, childcare, work uniforms, and other needs.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The Opportunities for Employment in Hospitality grant program is created to increase the number of workers from targeted populations employed in the hospitality industry. Targeted populations are persons who are: (1) experiencing homelessness; (2) reentering the workforce after an extended absence; (3) veterans; (4) spouses of veterans; or (5) seeking employment in hospitality.

An entity or person awarded the grant must:

- coordinate with the DSHS to connect participants with wraparound services;
- host a minimum of four hiring events (at least three in western Washington and one in eastern Washington);
- offer the targeted population postemployment services and training;
- create an annual report to the Legislature with data showing the number of individuals being served and the number who obtained employment; and
- participate in other activities to support the purpose of the grant.

The ESD must administer the grant, including performing any audits necessary to ensure grant funds are used solely to support the objective of the grant. A portion of the grant must be used to cover the costs incurred by the ESD and the DSHS for implementation.

The bill contains a null and void clause.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) It is important to have a qualified workforce in the hospitality industry and this bill creates a grant program to connect jobseekers with employers. The grant supports a public-private partnership to focus on targeted populations. The event hosted by the Washington Hospitality Association placed candidates in jobs and provided those workers with other services to help them stay employed. Hiring events break down traditional barriers for people who normally would not be able to access digital hiring platforms. Hiring events offer jobs at all levels, including second chances and entry level positions.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) WorkSource helps connect employers and workers and provides in-person support and job matching capabilities. Partnering with specific industries has been very successful.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Mead, prime sponsor; Jacque Farrell, Farrell's Pizza; and David Faro, Washington Hospitality Association Education Foundation.

(Other) Nick Streuli, Employment Security Department.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.