

HOUSE BILL NO. 541
INTRODUCED BY J. MUSGROVE

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT CREATING THE MONTANA YOUTH SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM; ESTABLISHING GOALS AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA; PROVIDING FOR ADMINISTRATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES THROUGH HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Short title -- purpose.** [Sections 1 through 7] may be cited as the "Montana Youth Summer Employment Program". The purpose of the Montana youth summer employment program is to provide Montana's low-income and at-risk youth with summer employment and job training that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning.

NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Legislative goals.** With the creation of the Montana youth summer employment program the legislature intends to:

- (1) provide as many eligible youth as possible with a quality summer employment experience that will lead to completion of a high school diploma, academic achievement, and future success in a paid employment setting;
- (2) provide summer employment opportunities to eligible youth, with emphasis on youth between 14 years of age and 17 years of age;
- (3) provide incentives for recognition and achievement to eligible youth;
- (4) provide opportunities for eligible youth to participate in activities related to leadership, development of general competencies and academic skills, decisionmaking, citizenship, and community service; and
- (5) ensure ongoing mentoring opportunities for eligible youth with adults committed to providing these opportunities.

NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Eligibility.** (1) To participate in the Montana youth summer employment program, a youth must be:

- (a) 14 years of age through 17 years of age; and
 - (b) economically disadvantaged as demonstrated by having a combined family income at or below 125% of the federal poverty level, as defined in 53-4-201.
- (2) Human resource development councils, as defined in 53-10-501, shall develop guidelines for verifying eligibility, including but not limited to verification of age and income.

NEW SECTION. Section 4. Authorized services. The authorized services provided under the Montana youth summer employment program may include:

- (1) work experience, which includes planned, structured, work-based learning experiences that may occur in a nonprofit, for-profit, private, or public sector workplace for a limited period. For the purposes of this section, the term "work experience" includes but is not limited to contextual learning opportunities that integrate the development of general competencies with the development of academic skills.
- (2) basic and remedial education and skills for obtaining and maintaining work, including:
 - (a) skills taught in or through youth corps programs, alternative or secondary schools, tutoring, mentoring, or programs on how to study;
 - (b) instruction leading to the completion of high school, including dropout prevention strategies; and
 - (c) leadership development opportunities;
- (3) classroom training, which may include opportunities to apply knowledge and skills related to academic subjects pertaining to employment;
- (4) support services, including transportation, child care, medical care, training-related personal supplies, and comprehensive guidance and counseling provided to individuals if the services are reasonable and necessary to enable a participant who cannot otherwise afford to pay for the services to participate. Comprehensive guidance and counseling may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral.
- (5) educational agreements with appropriate local educational agencies, as defined in 20-1-213, that are responsible for services to participants. Agreements may include arrangements to ensure that there is a regular exchange of information relating to the progress, problems, and needs of participants, including the results of the assessments of the skill levels of participants.

NEW SECTION. Section 5. Program operation period -- participant assessment -- performance.

- (1) Except as provided in subsection (2), the Montana youth summer employment program must be conducted during the school vacation period occurring during the summer months.

(2) In circumstances in which the local educational agency operates a school on a year-round, full-time basis, Montana youth summer employment program activities may be offered to participants during periods that are the equivalent of a school summer vacation period.

(3) The core indicators of performance success for the Montana youth summer employment program must be the rate of participants returning to school and the increased level of employability of participants. Benchmarks and measures for assessing performance must be developed by the department of public health and human services.

NEW SECTION. Section 6. Administration -- rulemaking. (1) Administrative costs may not be greater than 10% of the total amount expended on the program.

(2) The department of public health and human services has the authority to adopt rules governing the management and oversight of the Montana youth summer employment program. Human resource development councils shall administer the Montana youth summer employment program. The intergovernmental human services bureau of the department of public health and human services shall provide oversight for the program.

NEW SECTION. Section 7. Program requirements. The human resource development councils shall:

- (1) pay participants the minimum wage;
- (2) provide the participants with workers' compensation coverage while at a worksite.

NEW SECTION. Section 8. Appropriation -- restrictions. (1) For the purpose of establishing and administering a Montana youth summer employment program, the following amounts are appropriated from the general fund to the department of public health and human services for distribution to human resource development councils:

Fiscal Year 2008	\$2 million
Fiscal Year 2009	\$2 million

(2) The Montana youth summer employment program shall employ a minimum of 1,000 participants for every \$1 million spent.

(3) Money appropriated under this section must be distributed to all human resource development councils in the state.

NEW SECTION. Section 9. Codification instruction. [Sections 1 through 7] are intended to be codified

as an integral part of Title 53, and the provisions of Title 53 apply to [sections 1 through 7].

NEW SECTION. **Section 10. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2007.

NEW SECTION. **Section 11. Termination.** [This act] terminates September 15, 2009.

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