

Human Services Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-312

AN ACT CONCERNING A JANITORIAL WORK PROGRAM FOR PERSONS
Title: WITH A DISABILITY AND PERSONS WITH A DISADVANTAGE.

Vote Date: 3/19/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/5/2024

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Human Services Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The janitorial work program was created to expand janitorial work job opportunities for people with disabilities and people with disadvantages. This bill amends the statutes to clarify the criteria required for certified small or minority businesses to participate in the pre-existent janitorial work program. The bill also makes several technical changes to the state's Qualified Partnership Program, which provides contracting preference to organizations of companies that employ people with disabilities. Amending the statutes will make necessary technical and up-to-date changes while also expanding job opportunities for people with disabilities and people with disadvantages.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Department of Administrative Services \(DAS\), Commissioner, Michele Gilman;](#) supports this bill stating the current statutes appear to inadvertently waive the contractor requirements for certified small business employers, even though they are necessary to protect the interests of impacted workers. It is stated that this bill would amend the statutes to ensure that these contractor requirements apply to all companies.

[Department of Aging and Disability Services \(ADS\), Commissioner, Amy Porter;](#) supports this bill stating that it increases competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and members of other disadvantaged groups.

[Department of Developmental Services \(DDS\), Commissioner, Jordan Sheff;](#) supports this bill stating that the current statutes only allow for small businesses to participate in the program. It is stated that amending the statutes to allow all companies who meet the

qualifications to participate in the program will lead to more employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual disability.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Ben Shaiken, Director of Government Relations, CT Community Nonprofit Alliance:

supports this bill stating that since it makes it explicit that the Qualified Partnership program's requirements apply to small businesses the same way they apply to larger, commercial contractors. It is also stated that this legislation will officially update the name of the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance, whose name was changed in 2016.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Rick Sebastian, President, The Kennedy Collective: opposes this bill stating that although the intentions were to increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities and economic disadvantages, this legislation will do the opposite. It is stated that nonprofit janitorial contractors, unlike commercial contractors, are not able to seek pricing relief from the state for the increased cost of supplies. It is also stated that nonprofits cannot compete for state janitorial contracts and this bill will terminate 70 existing janitorial contracts—including 14 held by The Kennedy Collective—leading to the termination of 500 jobs, 300 of which were for people with disabilities. It is also stated that the QP model is a state-sanctioned elimination of private enterprise and competition. It is suggested that the Committee should repeal and modernize Section 4a-82 and Section 17a-796 of the CT General Statutes.

Reported by: Haritha Subramanian

Date: April 2, 2024