

Martin O'Malley  
Governor

Anthony Brown  
Lt. Governor

Brian Wilbon  
Interim Secretary

November 30, 2010

The Honorable Nathaniel Exum  
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Welfare Reform  
1891 Brightseat Road  
Landover, MD 20785-4526

The Honorable Talmadge Branch  
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Welfare Reform  
3224 Belair Road  
Baltimore, MD 21213-1228

RE: HB 268 Welfare to Work – Job Skills Enhancement Program – Green Jobs

Dear Senator Exum and Delegate Branch:

The Maryland Department of Human Resources (DHR) is submitting a report pursuant to House Bill 268. HB 268 requires that each year, the Department and any local departments that have entered into hiring agreements shall submit a report to the Board, the Joint Committee on Welfare Reform and the General Assembly on:

- (1) The number of hiring agreements executed;
- (2) The number of current and former recipients, foster youth, and obligors hired by an entity with which a hiring agreement was executed; and
- (3) The effectiveness of each hiring agreement in obtaining employment for current and former FIP recipients, children of current or former recipients, foster youth, and obligors.

In 2009 HB 268 amended the Welfare Innovation Act of 1998 (SB 686). SB 686 required the Department or a local department to develop hiring agreements for Family Investment Program (FIP) recipients, so that those FIP recipients may be considered for employment with eligible State contractors. HB 268 expanded the participants from only FIP recipients to former FIP recipients, children of current or former recipients, foster youth and child support obligors. However at this time, we are only able to report on TCA recipients as systems modifications were necessary to begin collecting data on the new populations. The agency's data system (WORKS) was reconfigured in August 2010 to store, track and generate reports of employment activities for the expanded targeted populations. Local departments of social services have already begun to populate the system with this data. Over the course of this fiscal year, we will aggressively work with our local departments to obtain the data needed to generate a comprehensive automated report statewide in time for the Department's 2011 report.

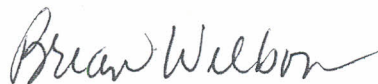
The Honorable Nathaniel Exum  
The Honorable Talmadge Branch  
HB 268 Section 13-224 Legislative Report – 2010  
November 30, 2010  
Page 2 of 2

During State Fiscal Year 2010 there were 242 Hiring Agreement Contracts held by 159 contractors. These contracts resulted in 40 TCA recipients being hired. Since the program's inception, the total number of TCA recipients in job placements is 1,225. The available wage data for TCA recipients hired during this period indicates that the average wage for these jobs was \$9.43 per hour with none reporting employer sponsored health benefits. The largest employers were Abacus Corporation, Hutch Staffing and Broadway Services Inc., with the highest concentration of jobs in the Housekeeping, Clerical and Security Officer sectors.

The effectiveness of the hiring agreement program can be measured by comparing employed TCA customers to unemployed TCA customers. Currently, employed TCA customers earn an average of \$9.43 per hour and gross an average of \$377 per week and \$1508 per month. In comparison, the average TCA household consists of three (3) people who receive a monthly grant of \$574. It is clear that TCA customers who obtain employment due to a hiring agreement are better off than those remaining on cash assistance.

In collaboration with the Department of General Services, the Department has briefed businesses operating in "green" industries regarding its paid internship funding program, which is an added resource that contractors may utilize to meet workforce needs. Through this program, the Department reimburses employers for hiring customers into positions that offer a competitive wage and the potential for long-term employment. The Department will continue to collaborate with sister agencies to ensure the success of the HB 268 Hiring Agreement program. If you require additional information, please have your staff contact Tammy Bresnahan, Executive Director, Office of Government, Corporate and Community Affairs, at 410-767-7193. Thank you for your concern and commitment to providing and improving opportunities for Maryland's most vulnerable citizens.

Sincerely,



Brian Wilbon  
Interim Secretary

cc: Sheila McDonald  
Stacy L. Rodgers  
Kevin M. McGuire  
Tammy Bresnahan