

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1640

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As of February 27, 2002

**Title:** An act relating to employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

**Brief Description:** Providing for expanded employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on State Government (originally sponsored by Representatives Miloscia, Dunn, Casada, Conway and Santos).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions: 2/27/02.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE & FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

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**Staff:** Kim Johnson (786-7486)

**Background:** The Department of General Administration, through the state purchasing and material control director, develops and administers contracts for goods and services on behalf of state agencies, colleges and universities, select nonprofit organizations, and local governments. Under some circumstances an agency may purchase materials, supplies, services, and equipment directly from a vendor.

Under current law there are two groups of services and products that are given preferential treatment by the state when purchasing goods and services. These groups include: (1) goods and services produced by inmate work programs; and (2) goods and services produced by sheltered workshops and programs.

Sheltered workshops are defined as nonprofit organizations whose primary purpose is to provide gainful employment or rehabilitation services to disabled persons who cannot readily be absorbed in the competitive labor market or during a time when employment opportunities in the competitive labor market do not exist.

**Summary of Bill:** Purchasing. Where possible, state agencies must purchase products and services produced by persons with disabilities who are employed by certified community rehabilitation programs, provided that the services and products: (1) are of standard price and quality; (2) have been certified by the commission; and (3) have been placed on the commission's list of certified products and services.

Commission. A commission is created to purchase products and services from persons with disabilities who are employed by certified community rehabilitation programs in the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the DSHS.

The commission consists of members from DSHS, GA, the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment, an advocacy organization for people with disabilities, and a certified community rehabilitation program.

The commission must: (1) certify the community rehabilitation programs; (2) review products, services, and bids; (3) establish an equitable market value for all products and services; (4) publish a list of all products and services available and provide the list to purchasing officers of state agencies; and (5) issue an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature.

Nonprofit Agency. The commission is required to designate a central nonprofit agency to represent the interests of the certified community rehabilitation programs and the disabled individuals employed by such programs. The nonprofit agency supervises the compliance with contract and quality standards required by the purchasing authority. The nonprofit agency is financed by a fee generated through contracts between certified community rehabilitation programs and the state.

This act does not apply to products and services available by prior agreement between two state agencies.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on January 1, 2003.