

House Resolution No. 19

100TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE UNSICKER.

0278H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

1 **WHEREAS**, work is physical or mental effort directed toward production of goods, the
2 provision of services, or the accomplishment of a goal; and

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4 **WHEREAS**, work for pay is a valued activity both for individuals and society, and
5 employment provides both tangible and intangible benefits; and

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7 **WHEREAS**, work is the most direct and cost-effective means to empower individuals
8 to achieve independence and economic self-sufficiency, and work also gives people purpose,
9 dignity, self-esteem, and a sense of accomplishment and pride; and

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11 **WHEREAS**, disability is a natural part of the human experience that in no way
12 diminishes the right of individuals with disabilities, including those individuals with the most
13 significant disabilities, to achieve, consistent with one's strengths, abilities, interests, and
14 priorities, the four goals of disability policy: equality of opportunity, full participation,
15 independent living, and economic self-sufficiency; and

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17 **WHEREAS**, all individuals, including individuals with the most significant disabilities,
18 should enjoy every opportunity to be employed in the workforce, pursue careers, and engage
19 actively in the economic marketplace; and

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21 **WHEREAS**, while expressing a desire and willingness to work in the community and
22 contribute to the state economy, many adults and youth with disabilities experience significant
23 barriers to employment; and

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25 **WHEREAS**, despite progress made since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities
26 Act and the Missouri Human Rights Act, individuals with disabilities still experience
27 unemployment and underemployment rates far above the national average, and the percentage

28 of individuals with disabilities participating in our workforce is far below the rate of individuals
29 without disabilities; and

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31 **WHEREAS**, consequently, individuals with disabilities continue to experience poverty
32 and economic insecurity in substantial numbers and in disproportion to people without
33 disabilities; and

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35 **WHEREAS**, individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant
36 disabilities, should be empowered to attain the highest possible wage, with benefits, and be
37 employed in the most integrated setting appropriate, consistent with their interests, strengths,
38 priorities, abilities, and capabilities; and

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40 **WHEREAS**, individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant
41 disabilities, should enjoy a presumption that they can achieve competitive, integrated
42 employment with appropriate services and supports; and

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44 **WHEREAS**, employment-related training services and supports should be provided for
45 as long as needed with a focus on use of natural occurring supports as much as possible; and

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47 **WHEREAS**, there is a need for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary
48 Education to ensure and local educational agencies to provide a free and appropriate public
49 education in the least restrictive environment to all students with disabilities, regardless of the
50 nature or severity of their disability, in order to enable such students to be challenged and learn
51 cooperatively with their peers; and

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53 **WHEREAS**, the provision of a free and appropriate public education includes the
54 provision of career development and other transition services and supports necessary and
55 appropriate to introduce students to competitive integrated employment; and

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57 **WHEREAS**, there is also a need for state government, including state departments,
58 agencies, and public institutions of higher education, to help close the employment gap between
59 individuals with and without disabilities, both directly as employers, and indirectly, by serving
60 as models for the private sector to emulate:

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62 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we, the members of the Missouri House
63 of Representatives, One Hundredth General Assembly, First Regular Session, hereby strongly
64 urge and request that:

65 (1) All state departments and agencies adopt a seamless system of services, supports, and
66 funding to increase options for competitive, integrated employment. The seamless system should
67 include the establishment of infrastructures and resource allocation, including staff time and
68 funding, that reflect the priority and preference for competitive, integrated employment; and

69 (2) All state departments, agencies, and public institutions of higher education become
70 model employers by taking proactive steps to recruit, hire, retain, and advance individuals with
71 disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities; and

72 (3) Local educational agencies adopt policies, practices, and procedures that facilitate
73 the provision of a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to
74 students with disabilities in accordance with federal and state law, including the provision of
75 career development and other transition services and supports leading to competitive integrated
76 employment; and

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78 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of
79 Representatives be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the
80 following executive departments: administration, agriculture, conservation, corrections,
81 economic development, elementary and secondary education, health and senior services, higher
82 education, insurance, labor and industrial relations, mental health, natural resources, public
83 safety, revenue, social services, and transportation.

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