

Testimony from Charilyn Goolsby
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My name is Charilyn Goolsby and I am the principal trainer at Strategic Training Solutions. I have been a service provider for DCF since June 2014. As a DCF provider, we facilitate what we consider an innovative approach to preparing Kansans for work. Rather than just providing traditional workforce development, we endeavor to engage the course participants in an introspective look at themselves and their current situation. This process produces a higher quality job candidate.

We support the proposed legislation, which would make many DCF policies Kansas law. The proposed legislation will support TANF recipients in going from public assistance to public contribution. It requires Kansans that need assistance to participate in programs and training that will best prepare them for work. The expectation of a TANF recipient should be that if you need assistance, the state is here for you, but it is asking you to grow and develop yourself to be a self-sufficient Kansan.

Many TANF clients come to us having had several jobs in the last two years, and some with no work experience at all. Many come depressed and overwhelmed because they want to work, but they are emotionally stuck, unable to pull themselves up. Work Programs is the vehicle that transitions them from public assistance to public contribution.

The workers on the front lines report that most clients want to work, but they do not know where to begin. Not only do they lack technical skill, but also they lack the social skills and confidence to get and maintain employment. Work programs and our style of training support and meet people where they are. We have seen many clients go from jobless to full time jobs. In addition, this training leaves participants with the possibility of certifications such as OSHA safety credentials.

Clients need tools and guidance to operate successfully in the workplace and work programs does just that. Should this legislation become law, it would give all TANF recipients the opportunity for training, personal growth and development, the opportunity to be self-reflective and to become an active participant in becoming self-sufficient.

It is without reservation that I support The Hope Act, giving Kansans, as a matter of law, the opportunity to succeed.