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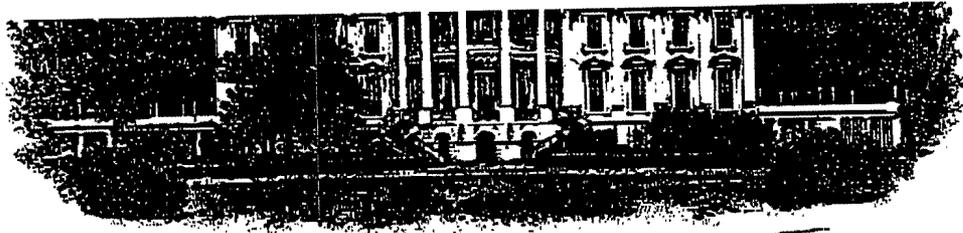
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273-7419

October 20, 1998

NOTE TO BRIDGE WORKING GROUP

FROM: Cynthia Rice and Cecilia Rouse

SUBJ: Suggested Paper for 10/26 Deputies Meeting

We are planning an NEC-DPC Deputies meeting for Monday October 26th.

Please review the attached memo and fax any proposed edits to 456-7431 by noon on Wednesday, October 21st.

Also attached for your information is the latest version of the longer memo.

October 20, 1998 DRAFT

MEMORANDUM FOR NEC-DPC DEPUTIES

FROM: "BRIDGE" WORKING GROUP

SUBJECT: The Proposed BRIDGE Program

On March 13, 1998 the President issued Executive Order 13078 directing the federal agencies to create a coordinated and aggressive national policy to increase employment of adults with disabilities. The "Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment" ("BRIDGE") program is one of several new proposals to grow out of this effort. BRIDGE is a competitive grant program designed to increase the employment rate of adults with disabilities by fostering integration at the local level of employment-related services and support services to adults with disabilities.

The purpose of this meeting is to: 1) review the overall structure of the BRIDGE program developed by the interagency working group; 2) consider two design issues: a) the proposal to create a strong federal interagency coordinating process while providing all, or nearly all, funding to one agency; and b) which state and local agencies should be a required members of the applicant consortium; and 3) consider the possibility of announcing the President's support for this effort in December at the next meeting of the President's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities.

I. Program Need

According to the 1998 Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, 66% of individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are not working. Only 30% of working-age adults with disabilities are employed full or part-time. Seventy-five percent of those non-employed adults with disabilities have indicated that they would prefer to be working (Harris Survey, 1998.) The vast majority of these individuals receive income support and other services through federal, state, and local programs. However in many areas, needed services such as health care are unavailable and those services that do exist are fragmented and difficult to access.

II. Proposed BRIDGE Program Structure

BRIDGE will encourage states and localities to create seamless service

systems for adults with disabilities seeking to find and keep jobs. Every adult with a disability should be able learn about, receive advice about, and gain access to all of the necessary services with the least effort possible, preferably with a single call or office visit. Each of the services provided should be sufficiently integrated with others so that they collectively accomplish the common goal of long-term employment and permanent attachment to the workforce.

BRIDGE will build on current demonstration grant programs funded by the SSA, Labor, Education, and HHS which are designed to increase program coordination for people with disabilities and will enhance the new workforce system infrastructure being expanded under the Workforce Investment Act's One Stop system.

BRIDGE funds will be available on a competitive basis to consortia of state and local agencies serving individuals with mental or physical disabilities. Grant proposals will be encouraged to enhance service delivery with expanded wrap-around counseling, provision of information that can maximize scarce resources and employment outcomes, and other approaches that address barriers to employment by integrated and coordinated service delivery. While the program is designed primarily to encourage state and local efforts to assist all people with disabilities, efforts targeted to assist certain specific groups of people with disabilities, e.g., youth, mentally ill.

BRIDGE grants would be awarded from a national account of \$150 million in FY 2000. Grants would last for up to five years with funding beyond the first year contingent upon subsequent appropriations. Up to 5 percent of the grant amount would be reserved for rigorous evaluation. Current funding for traditional disability employment programs would not be supplanted by this initiative.

III. Particular Program Design Issues to Consider

A. Interagency Structure

Agency representatives involved in the working group consider it critically important that this new program be a truly interagency effort. Reasons include: 1) the federal government can and should set an example; 2) multi-program expertise will help in judging proposals quality and in helping the consortia access needed federal assistance. Options include:

- (1) Create an inter-agency board to review applications and provide on-going policy guidance, but fund the program through one agency.
- (2) Fund the program through one agency, but require the Secretary (or Director) of that agency to make the BRIDGE grants in consultation with the Secretaries (or Directors) of the other agencies.

- (3) Fund several agencies and require them to work together in awarding grants.

If funding is provided solely to one agency, the Department of Labor is the working group's consensus choice. If some funds are allocated to other agencies as well, then the Department of Education and SSA would also want to be considered for funding.

B. Mandatory Members of the Applicant Consortia

To be considered for a BRIDGE grant, consortia must include one of five public agencies which must contribute resources to the work of their consortia:

- Local and/or district offices of SSA
- Medicaid/state medical assistance agencies
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Regional Offices
- State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies
- Local Workforce Investment Boards/One-Stop Centers

Applicants will receive additional credit in the selection process for other members of the consortia. An unresolved question is whether State TANF agencies should be:

- (1) A required member of the applicant consortia, meaning that a consortia that did not include the state TANF agency would be ineligible for BRIDGE funds.
- (2) An optional member of the applicant consortia, meaning that a consortia including the TANF agency would get extra points in the selection process.

IV. Timing of the Announcement

We may wish to announce support for the BRIDGE program before final FY 2000 budget decisions have been made, particularly if the President speaks to his Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities' meeting in December. In that circumstance we may seek to either:

- (1) Announce support for the program concept, without committing to a

dollar amount.

- (2) Announce support for the program funded at a certain minimum stated dollar amount.

Appendix of "Non-Controversial" Program Design Issues

Eligible Applicants

Each applicant must be a consortium of state and/or local agencies that provide or could provide a range of supports and services to adults with disabilities which lead to finding and keeping employment. The agencies must have the legal authority to provide the services they propose. Consortia may include not-for-profit providers of employment, assistive technology, health and other related services to adults with disabilities.

Successful applicants would demonstrate that they have identified the means to integrate and coordinate the services provided across agencies and to remove barriers to employment for adults with disabilities. Further, successful applicants would demonstrate that they consulted with diverse elements within the community of adults with disabilities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. In addition, successful applicants would demonstrate that they will match BRIDGE funds with appropriate federal, state, and/or local funds or in-kind services. Finally, preference will be given to applicants that demonstrate how they would ensure the continuation of health care coverage to persons with disabilities after the return to work.

To be considered for a BRIDGE grant:

- Consortia must include the following five public agencies which must, in turn, contribute resources to the work of their consortia over the span of the grants: local and/or district offices of SSA, Medicaid/state medical assistance agencies, Department of Veterans of Affairs (VA) regional offices, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, and local workforce investment boards/One-Stop Centers.
- Applications will be given substantial additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes any of the following entities that demonstrate a commitment of resources to the work of the consortia: state TANF agencies, independent Living Centers, state developmental disability agencies, state mental retardation agencies, state mental health agencies, vocational rehabilitation centers for the blind and deaf, state/local transportation agencies, public transit authorities, and metropolitan planning organizations.
- Applications will be given some additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes the following entities as formal partners (e.g., through MOUs or other types of formal agreements): educational institutions,

agencies, and boards of education, consumer organizations, economic development agencies, labor organizations, private non-profit service providers, protection advocacy agency, public housing authorities, small business administration offices and/or small business development centers.

Allowable Activities

Allowable activities include those needed to achieve program integration and improved coordination of existing local, state and federal programs in the delivery of services to adults with disabilities and their achievement of self-sustaining employment and economic independence. Allowable activities include:

- Planning, development and implementation of cooperative agreements, including service system planning, and development, planning and creation of core services structures;
- Establishing partnerships among entities to provide integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services, such as transportation assistance;
- Providing training among consortium partners and required partners under the Workforce Investment Act to increase knowledge and awareness of incentives, available services, and health care waiver provisions, and to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system;
- Providing comprehensive pre-service assistance, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act and information on the array of available services to individuals with disabilities that increase the ability to obtain and retain employment;
- Developing and implementing procedures that promote a "single point of entry" or "one-stop service delivery" such as common intake, coordination of customer data bases, customer service hotlines, and access to information resources through technology or staff assistance;
- Establishing linkages of consortium partners with services provided through One-Stop Center system, under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, to ensure comprehensive and coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;
- Establishing linkages with other providers of services that people with disabilities may need to find and keep gainful employment, including local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community based organizations, and educational institutions;
- Implementing accessible information technology linkages between programs and infrastructures, such as provided in One-Stop Centers that provide labor market, skill requirements, job listings and available training providers.

Available funding for information technology infrastructure development and implementation will be limited to 20%, with any additional support funded by respective consortium partners; and

- Evaluating programs or activities funded by BRIDGE grants.

With the exception of pre-service assistance, BRIDGE funds cannot be used for direct services and direct services must be provided by the local, state and/or federally funded program available for that purpose.

Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE)

Introduction

On March 13, 1998, the President issued Executive Order No. 13078 entitled "Increasing Employment of Adults with Disabilities." The Executive Order directs federal agencies and departments to create a coordinated and aggressive national policy to accomplish that goal. As part of the effort to fulfill the President's mandate, the Departments of Labor, Education, Transportation, Commerce, Veterans Affairs, and Health and Human Services along with the Social Security Administration and the Small Business Administration are proposing the "Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment" ("BRIDGE") Program.

BRIDGE will help to increase the employment rate of adults with disabilities by fostering integration of employment-related services and support services to adults with disabilities among state and local disability systems *at the point of delivery*. Through competitive grants, BRIDGE will help people with disabilities access all of the services they need to find and keep employment through a single point of entry, rather than having to sort through a dizzying bureaucracy on their own. BRIDGE will also foster effective integration of service delivery so that different agencies with related missions will work together to achieve their common goal: employment of adults with disabilities.

Background

According to the 1998 Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, two-thirds of individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are not working. Only three in ten working-age adults with disabilities are employed full or part-time. Seventy-five percent of those non-employed adults with disabilities have indicated that they would prefer to be working (Harris Survey, 1998.) The vast majority of these individuals receive income support and other services through federal, state, and local programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Medicaid (including Medicaid waiver programs), Medicare, mental health services, vocational rehabilitation, subsidized housing, and food stamps.

Even though legislation, technology, and changes in societal attitudes have improved the environment for employment, fewer than 1% per year of the eight million SSI and SSDI beneficiaries actually return to work and terminate benefits. In fact, over the past decade, the total number of SSI and SSDI disability beneficiaries has doubled and federal cash payments to these individuals have

steadily increased to more than \$75 billion annually (SSA, 1998). The costs of related Medicaid coverage also continues to escalate. These figures will continue to increase dramatically with the increased incidence of disability in an aging population, and the migration of many Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients with disabilities from welfare to SSI/SSDI roles.

The Policy Problem

People with disabilities are a diverse population requiring a variety of services and supports to seek and retain employment. While a host of services and supports are currently provided by government, programs are dispersed among numerous departments and agencies. In addition, states and localities vary enormously in the structure, availability and effectiveness of their employment, health care, and other human services and support programs. For example, many states do not take full advantage of available authority to provide services that are vital to persons with disabilities returning to work, such as continued health care coverage, so that there may be a need for states to consider possible changes to their existing policies. Moreover, the current fragmented approach to supplying these needed services and programs has rendered them less effective in assisting adults with disabilities in finding and maintaining competitive employment. In addition, while the programs are intended to accomplish the same outcome --- that is, helping adults with disabilities become employed --- they frequently do not work well together.

Lack of service coordination and integration results in negative consequences for employers and service providers, both public and private. Most important, they do not have ready access to skilled and effective workers with disabilities. But they also find their efforts frequently wasted. For example, in some states, job counselors do not have access to job listings from agencies that administer employment and training programs. In addition, many different service providers (a vocational rehabilitation counselor, an employment training specialist, a supported employment job developer, or a representative from Projects With Industry) may all be independently contacting the same employer to develop employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. This results in duplication of effort, confusion, and complications in the relationship between the service providers and employers; the very relationship that is often critical to employment success.

Current Efforts

Currently, the Social Security Administration, and the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services have grant programs to develop and evaluate models of program coordination, service/systems integration and systems change to increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities at the state

and local level. These agencies have published individual and joint grant announcements for competitive grant awards that have been made in FY 1998.

- The Social Security Administration, jointly funded with Health and Human Services/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Center for Mental Health Services, is administering the "Cooperative Agreements for State Projects which Increase Employment of Individuals with Disabilities Who Receive Public Support."
- The Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) administers a Disability Employment and Initiatives grant program that fosters linkages with the One-Stop Center system, interagency coordination of multiple service needs, and is designed to support the objectives of Executive Order No. 13078 to increase employment of people with disabilities.
- The Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)/ Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), jointly funded with DOL/ETA, is administering "Systems-Change Projects to Expand Employment Opportunities for Individuals With Mental or Physical Disabilities, or Both, Who Receive Public Support."

The BRIDGE Initiative

BRIDGE will build on the grant programs described above, with a greater emphasis on single-point-of-entry or "one-stop" service for adults with disabilities seeking to find and keep a job. Each adult with a disability --- each "customer" --- seeking the services needed to succeed in competitive employment should be able learn about, receive advice about, and gain access to all of the necessary services with the least effort possible, preferably with a single call or office visit. Thereafter, each of the services provided to our customer should be sufficiently integrated with all of the other services so that they collectively accomplish the common goal of long-term employment and permanent attachment to the workforce. BRIDGE exemplifies new workforce system infrastructure approaches at the state and local level that promote universal access through One-Stop Centers, integrated service delivery, enhanced customer information, and choice to improve employment potential and opportunity.

BRIDGE will emphasize the need to focus on the point of the delivery of services and the need to be flexible and adapt to state and local conditions as well as ensure that needed services are available. For this reason, state and local agencies will be given the greatest leeway possible to assemble and organize consortiums that best serve their populations. Grant proposals will be designed to enhance service delivery with expanded wrap-around counseling, provision of

information that can maximize scarce resources and employment outcomes, and other approaches that address customer and community barriers to employment by integrated and coordinated service delivery.

BRIDGE would be linked to the existing grant programs in that grant competitions under BRIDGE would incorporate any lessons learned in the existing programs. Further, grantees under the existing programs would be allowed to apply for additional funds to expand their current efforts. Finally, all applicants would be required to identify and discuss the implications of their proposed efforts to grants in their state or localities under the existing programs.

Target Population

Consortia of agencies providing services to individuals with mental or physical disabilities, or both, who are participants in federal, state, and/or local public support programs (e.g., TANF, SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, subsidized housing, and food stamps, etc.) will be eligible for grants under the BRIDGE program.

Eligible Applicants

Each applicant must be a consortium of state and/or local agencies that provide or could provide a range of supports and services to adults with disabilities which lead to finding and keeping employment. The agencies must have the legal authority to provide the services they propose. Consortia may include not-for-profit providers of employment, assistive technology, health and other related services to adults with disabilities.

Successful applicants would demonstrate that they have identified the means to integrate and coordinate the services provided across agencies and to remove barriers to employment for adults with disabilities. Further, successful applicants would demonstrate that they consulted with diverse elements within the community of adults with disabilities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. In addition, successful applicants would demonstrate that they will match BRIDGE funds with appropriate federal, state, and/or local funds or in-kind services. Finally, preference will be given to applicants that demonstrate how they would ensure the continuation of health care coverage to persons with disabilities after the return to work.

To be considered for a BRIDGE grant:

- Consortia must include the following five public agencies which must, in turn, contribute resources to the work of their consortia over the span of the grants:

Local and/or district offices of SSA
Medicaid/state medical assistance agencies
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Regional Offices
State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies
Local Workforce Investment Boards/One-Stop Centers

- Applications will be given substantial additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes any of the following entities that demonstrate a commitment of resources to the work of the consortia:
 - State TANF agencies
 - Independent Living Centers
 - State developmental disability agencies
 - State mental retardation agencies
 - State mental health agencies
 - Vocational rehabilitation agencies for the blind and deaf
 - State/local transportation agencies, public transit authorities, metropolitan planning organizations
- Applications will be given some additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes the following entities as formal partners (e.g., through MOUs or other types of formal agreements):
 - Educational institutions, agencies, and boards of education
 - Consumer organizations
 - Economic development agencies
 - Labor organizations
 - Private non-profit service providers
 - Protection advocacy agencies
 - Public housing authorities
 - Small business administration offices and/or small business development centers

Finally, up to 5 percent of the grant amount would be reserved for rigorous evaluation. Each applicant would have to demonstrate an ability and willingness to cooperate in a meaningful fashion in an overall evaluation of their coordination and integration efforts.

Allowable Activities

Allowable activities include those needed to achieve program integration and improved coordination of existing local, state and federal programs in the delivery of services to adults with disabilities and their achievement of self-sustaining employment and economic independence. Allowable activities include:

- planning, development and implementation of cooperative agreements,

including service system planning, and development, planning and creation of core services structures;

- establishing partnerships among entities to provide integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services, such as transportation assistance;
- providing training amongst consortium partners and required partners under the Workforce Investment Act to increase knowledge and awareness of incentives, available services, and health care waiver provisions, and to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system;
- comprehensive pre-service assistance, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act and information on the array of available services to individuals with disabilities that increase the ability to obtain and retain employment;
- developing and implementing procedures that promote a "single point of entry" or "one-stop service delivery" such as common intake, coordination of customer data bases, customer service hotlines, and access to information resources through technology or staff assistance;
- establishing linkages of consortium partners with services provided through One-Stop Center system, under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, to ensure comprehensive and coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;
- establishing linkages with other providers of services that people with disabilities may need to find and keep gainful employment, including local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community based organizations, and educational institutions;
- implementing accessible information technology linkages between programs and infrastructures, such as provided in One-Stop Centers that provide labor market, skill requirements, job listings and available training providers. Available funding for information technology infrastructure development and implementation will be limited to 20%, with any additional support funded by respective consortium partners; and
- evaluation of program or activities funded by BRIDGE grants.

With the exception of pre-service assistance, BRIDGE funds can not be used for direct services and direct services must be provided by the local, state and/or federally funded program available for that purpose. The intent of BRIDGE is to

make these services readily accessible and comprehensible to the consumer.

Availability of Funding

BRIDGE grants would be awarded from a national account of \$150 million in FY 2000. Grants would last for up to five years with funding in FY 2001 through FY 2004 contingent upon subsequent appropriations. Current funding for traditional disability employment programs would not be supplanted by this initiative.

Expected Outcomes

These grants will produce a diverse array of integrated and coordinated service systems in states and local areas across the country that will effect the following. Some of the expected outcomes will include the following:

Adults with disabilities will:

- Have a greater rate of gainful employment within a competitive work environment than before BRIDGE or compared to non-BRIDGE participants.
- enter into gainful employment within a competitive work environment at a higher rate of pay than they receive currently;
- more easily and rapidly access a wider and more diverse array of employment services resulting in efficient and rapid job placement that will improve job skills, job opportunities, job placement, and job retention for adults with disabilities;
- be more satisfied with employment and related support services;
- have more input concerning their life goals and career plans;
- have more choices with respect to employment and career decisions;
- be more readily accommodated within the work force;
- have a better understanding of work incentive provisions; and
- report that their quality of life has improved.

State and local service delivery systems will:

- be less fragmented; have improved communication across systems, and be more efficient by decreasing duplication of services;
- be more user friendly and customer oriented;
- be more cost-effective than services provided in less integrated delivery service systems;
- systematically decrease barriers to employment of adults with disabilities at state and local levels (e.g. lack of: transportation, health care/insurance, education, workforce training, housing, assistive technology, civil rights, on-site and off-site job accommodations and long-term follow-along supports);

- increase the use of Medicaid waivers and individual waivers of SSA eligibility and income requirements; and
- realize substantial cost savings in terms of reducing the costs of public benefit programs.

(9) evaluation of programs or activities funded under this Act.

Attachment: Proposed Legislative Language for Allowable Activities

SEC. ____ AUTHORIZED BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES.--

(a) Systems Change Grants.-- Funds made available from appropriations for carrying out this Act may be used to provide assistance pursuant to grants or contracts with eligible entities in each State for--

(1) the establishment of partnerships utilizing existing local, State, and Federal resources for the purpose of achieving the coordinated provision of integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services for adults with disabilities;

(2) the planning, development, and implementation of cooperative agreements among consortium members establishing such new partnerships;

(3) making arrangements to link such services with local one-stop delivery systems under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in a manner that comprehensively supports coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;

(4) the provision of training and technical assistance to consortium partners under this Act and to all components of the Statewide workforce investment system under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in order--

(A) to increase awareness of the availability of and the eligibility requirements for employment-related benefits, services, and training for adults with disabilities; and

(B) to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities in the State through improved understanding and knowledge of program accessibility needs and requirements;

(5) the development and implementation of procedures designed to enhance the provision of services for adults with disabilities through such means as common intake, resource information and assistance (including assistance in resume preparation and career development, and information on employment-related services, programs, and benefits), the development of customer databases and customer service hotlines, and appropriate employment-related counseling and referrals, utilizing single point-of-entry systems involving appropriate electronic and staff assistance;

(6) the development of information systems that link consortium partners with the Statewide workforce investment system and with national, State, and local labor market information resources, including employment statistics and information on job vacancies;

(7) the establishment of linkages with other providers of services that adults with disabilities may need in order to find and keep gainful employment, including such providers as local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community-based organizations, and educational institutions;

(8) the establishment of arrangements for the provision of comprehensive pre-service assistance for individuals with disabilities, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act, and information on the array of available services, including transportation assistance and subsidies; and

(b) IMPROVED SERVICES TO BETTER SERVE TARGETED POPULATIONS. --

In order to better serve targeted sub-populations among adults with disabilities, funds made available from appropriations for carrying out this Act may be used to provide assistance pursuant to grants or contracts--

(1) to enable a State's publicly-funded entities serving specific sub-populations of adults with disabilities (including individuals who are blind or deaf, or have psychiatric or developmental disabilities, and others) to provide training and technical assistance to consortium partners, relating to the specific needs and barriers faced by their clients;

(2) to identify and implement systems changes that address unique barriers to employment for targeted sub-populations, including--

(A) linkages and improved access to transportation for those with mobility impairments;

(B) resolution of housing issues facing those experiencing de-institutionalization or loss of public housing support; and

(C) other barriers to entry into employment and job retention; and

(3) to identify and implement service delivery approaches for targeted sub-populations that bridge or cut across the relevant State systems, in order to address specific barriers confronting such sub-populations.

(c) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.-- Not to exceed 20 percent of the amounts available for grants or contracts under this section may be used for the acquisition of computer hardware and software to facilitate linking or consolidating information or services provided by existing State, local, and Federal providers.

Ant's Redraws

① Wants Education
as mandatory agency

② TANF too

③ Implementation issues

→ planning policy

→ then coordination

→ how we handle

local + state rel

October 15, 1998

**Changes to October 9, 1998 Bridge Program Document to Reflect
Agreements Reached at October 14, 1998 NEC/DPC Meeting**

Major Changes

1. **Policy problem** -- It was agreed that the description of the policy problem would be revised to reflect the need in some states to repackage/reconfigure state policies to ensure that needed services are available at the local level when these services are coordinated and integrated. To do this, make the following change:

2nd page, 1st full paragraph -- Insert the following language after the 3rd sentence.

“For example, many states do not take full advantage of available authority to provide services that are vital to persons with disabilities returning to work, such as continued health care coverage, so that there may be a need for states to consider possible changes to their existing policies. Moreover, the current fragmented approach.....”

3rd page, 2nd full paragraph under The Bridge Initiative -- Insert at the end of the first sentence:

“as well as ensure that needed services are available.”

2. **Preference for health care coverage** -- It was agreed to give preference in the selection criteria to consortia that demonstrated how they would provide continued health coverage after the return to work. To do this, make the following change:

page 4, 2nd paragraph under eligible applicants -- add the following language after the first question.

“Successful applicants also would demonstrate how they would ensure the continuation of health care coverage to persons with disabilities after the return to work. Further, successful applicants would demonstrate...”

3. **Policy planning in allowable activities** -- It was agreed that policy planning should be included in the allowable activities given the significant policy issues imbedded in the current lack of integration. To do this, make the following change:

page 5, 1st bullet under allowable activities -- add the following language to this bullet.

“including service system planning and development and the planning and creation of core services structures.”

4. **Broaden allowable activity related to information technology** -- It was agreed to broaden this language to make it clear that IT expenditures outside of one-stop centers is allowable and such expenditures are for accessible IT. To do this, make the following change:

page 6, next to last bullet under allowable activities -- revise the first sentence as follows.

“Implementing accessible information technology linkages between programs and infrastructures such as One Stop Centers that provide labor market, skill requirements, job listings and available training providers.”

Miscellaneous Changes

P. 3, The Bridge Initiative, 2nd para: In 3rd sentence, delete “through the One-Stop Center.”

P. 4, Eligible Applicants, 2nd para: In last sentence, substitute “cash or in-kind services” for “cash.”

P. 6, Availability of Funding: In second sentence, substitute “five” for “three.”

BRIDGE →
take out b/w
graph → put at
end "Finally
preferred
but given..."

Phone calls Friday

Next steps

- ① Talk Ed, SSA, HHS (w/OMB) res & agency
- ② Memo/Decisions for Deputies mtg
- ③ Chris/Jeanne Dec 2nd - 4m
- ④ Bob Williams re = TIME

October 13, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR NEC-DPC DEPUTIES

FROM: "BRIDGE" WORKING GROUP

SUBJECT: Options for Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE)

The President's task force on increasing employment of adults with disabilities proposes a new initiative: the "Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment" ("BRIDGE") Program. BRIDGE is designed to increase the employment rate of adults with disabilities by fostering integration of employment-related services and support services to adults with disabilities among state and local disability systems at the point of delivery.

The goal for this meeting is for the Deputies to 1) discuss the BRIDGE initiative; 2) decide which agency should administer the program; and 3) consider the appropriate time and place for the initiative to be announced.

Background

According to the 1998 Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, two-thirds of individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are not working. Only three in ten working-age adults with disabilities are employed full or part-time. Seventy-five percent of those non-employed adults with disabilities have indicated that they would prefer to be working (Harris Survey, 1998.) The vast majority of these individuals receive income support and other services through federal, state, and local programs.

One challenge to developing effective employment programs is that people with disabilities are a diverse population requiring a variety of services and supports to seek and retain employment. While a host of services and supports are currently provided by government, programs are dispersed among numerous departments and agencies. In addition, states and localities vary enormously in the structure, availability and effectiveness of their employment, health care, and other human services and support programs. The current fragmented approach to supplying these needed services and programs has rendered them less effective in assisting adults with disabilities in finding and maintaining competitive employment. In addition, while the programs are intended to accomplish the same outcome -- helping adults with disabilities become employed -- they frequently do not work well together.

Lack of service coordination and integration results in negative consequences for employers and service providers, both public and private. Employers do not have ready access to skilled and effective workers with disabilities, and in some states, job counselors do not have access to job listings from agencies that administer employment and training programs. In addition, many different service providers (a vocational rehabilitation counselor, an employment training specialist, a supported employment job developer, or a representative from Projects With Industry) may all be

independently contacting the same employer to develop employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. This results in duplication of effort, confusion, and complications in the relationship between the service providers and employers; the very relationship that is often critical to employment success.

Currently, the Social Security Administration, and the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services have grant programs to develop and evaluate models of program coordination, service/systems integration and systems change to increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities at the state and local level. These agencies have published individual and joint grant announcements for competitive grant awards that have been made in FY 1998. *more*

The BRIDGE Initiative

→ Competitive grant funds / ensure coordination

BRIDGE will build on the current grant programs with a greater emphasis on single-point-of-entry or "one-stop" service for adults with disabilities seeking to find and keep a job. Each adult with a disability ~~each "customer"~~ seeking the services needed to succeed in competitive employment should be able learn about, receive advice about, and gain access to all of the necessary services with the least effort possible, preferably with a single call or office visit. Thereafter, each of the services provided to our customer should be sufficiently integrated with all of the other services so that they collectively accomplish the common goal of long-term employment and permanent attachment to the workforce. BRIDGE exemplifies new workforce system infrastructure approaches at the state and local level that promote universal access through One-Stop Centers, integrated service delivery, enhanced customer information, and choice to improve employment potential and opportunity.

BRIDGE is designed to focus on the point of the delivery of services and the need to be responsive to state and local conditions. For this reason, state and local agencies will be given the greatest leeway possible to assemble and organize consortiums that best serve their populations. Grant proposals will be encouraged to enhance service delivery through the One-Stop Centers with expanded wrap-around counseling, provision of information that can maximize scarce resources and employment outcomes, and other approaches that address customer and community barriers to employment by integrated and coordinated service delivery.

Consortia of agencies providing services to individuals with mental or physical disabilities, or both, who are participants in federal, state, and/or local public support programs (e.g., TANF, SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, subsidized housing, and food stamps, etc.) will be eligible for grants under the BRIDGE program. BRIDGE would be linked to the existing grant programs in that grant competitions under BRIDGE would incorporate any lessons learned in the existing programs. Further, grantees under the existing programs would be allowed to apply for additional funds to expand their current efforts. Finally, all applicants would be required to identify and discuss the implications of their proposed efforts to grants in their state or localities under the existing programs.

BRIDGE grants would be awarded from a national account of \$150 million in FY 2000. Grants would last for three years with funding in FY 2001 and FY 2002 contingent upon subsequent appropriations. Up to 5 percent of the grant amount would be reserved for rigorous evaluation. Each

applicant would have to demonstrate an ability and willingness to cooperate in a meaningful fashion in an overall evaluation of their coordination and integration efforts. Finally, current funding for traditional disability employment programs would not be supplanted by this initiative.

Decisions for this Meeting

There are three decisions for the Deputies meeting. First, is whether TANF should be a mandatory member of the consortium; the second is in which agency the program should reside; and the third is whether we could announce the program in November and the Task Force's first annual meeting....

1. In which agency should the program reside?

Options include DOL (ETA), SSA, HHS, and Education

Appendix of "Non-Controversial" Program Design Issues

Eligible Applicants

Each applicant must be a consortium of state and/or local agencies that provide or could provide a range of supports and services to adults with disabilities which lead to finding and keeping employment. The agencies must have the legal authority to provide the services they propose. Consortia may include not-for-profit providers of employment, assistive technology, health and other related services to adults with disabilities.

Successful applicants would demonstrate that they have identified the means to integrate and coordinate the services provided across agencies and to remove barriers to employment for adults with disabilities. Successful applicants would also demonstrate that they consulted with diverse elements within the community of adults with disabilities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. Finally, successful applicants would demonstrate that they will match BRIDGE funds with appropriate federal, state, and/or local funds.

To be considered for a BRIDGE grant:

- Consortia must include the following five public agencies which must, in turn, contribute resources to the work of their consortia over the span of the grants: local and/or district offices of SSA, Medicaid/state medical assistance agencies, Veterans Administration regional offices/vocational and counseling offices, state vocational rehabilitation agencies, and local workforce investment boards/One-Stop Centers.
- Applications will be given substantial additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes any of the following entities that demonstrate a commitment of resources to the work of the consortia: state TANF agencies, independent Living Centers, state developmental disability agencies, state mental retardation agencies, state mental health agencies, vocational rehabilitation centers for the blind and deaf, state/local transportation agencies, public transit authorities, and metropolitan planning organizations.
- Applications will be given some additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes the following entities as formal partners (e.g., through MOUs or other types of formal agreements): community colleges, consumer organizations, economic development agencies, education agency/boards of education, labor organizations, private non-profit service providers, protection advocacy agency, public housing authorities, school-to-work agency, small business administration offices and/or small business development centers.

Allowable Activities

Allowable activities include those needed to achieve program integration and improved coordination of existing local, state and federal programs in the delivery of services to adults with disabilities and their achievement of self-sustaining employment and economic independence.

Allowable activities include:

- establishing partnerships among entities to provide integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services, such as transportation assistance;
- providing training among consortium partners and required partners under the Workforce Investment Act to increase knowledge and awareness of incentives, available services, and health care waiver provisions, and to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system;
- providing comprehensive pre-service assistance, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act and information on the array of available services to individuals with disabilities that increase the ability to obtain and retain employment;

- developing and implementing procedures that promote a “single point of entry” or “one-stop service delivery” such as common intake, coordination of customer data bases, customer service hotlines; and access to information resources through technology or staff assistance;
- establishing linkages of consortium partners with services provided through One-Stop Center system, under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, to ensure comprehensive and coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;
- establishing linkages with other providers of services that people with disabilities may need to find and keep gainful employment, including local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community based organizations, and educational institutions;
- implementing information technology linkages to One-Stop Center infrastructure providing labor market, skill requirements, job listings and available training providers. Available funding for information technology infrastructure development and implementation will be limited to 20%, with any additional support funded by respective consortium partners; and
- evaluating programs or activities funded by BRIDGE grants.

With the exception of pre-service assistance, BRIDGE funds cannot be used for direct services and direct services must be provided by the local, state and/or federally funded program available for that purpose. The intent of BRIDGE is to make these services readily accessible and comprehensible to the consumer.

Expected Outcomes

These grants will produce a diverse array of integrated and coordinated service systems in states and local areas across the country that will effect the following. Some of the expected outcomes include allowing adults with disabilities to enter into gainful employment within a competitive work environment at a higher rate of pay than they receive currently and more easily and rapidly accessing a wider array of employment services resulting in rapid job placement and longer job retention for adults with disabilities. In addition this program is designed to make the state and local service delivery systems less fragmented and more efficient by decreasing duplication of services, and to make them more user friendly and customer oriented.

Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE)

Introduction

On March 13, 1998, the President issued Executive Order No. 13078 entitled "Increasing Employment of Adults with Disabilities." The Executive Order directs federal agencies and departments to create a coordinated and aggressive national policy to accomplish that goal. As part of the effort to fulfill the President's mandate, the Departments of Labor, Education, Transportation, Commerce, Veterans Affairs, and Health and Human Services along with the Social Security Administration and the Small Business Administration are proposing the "Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment" ("BRIDGE") Program.

BRIDGE will help to increase the employment rate of adults with disabilities by fostering integration of employment-related services and support services to adults with disabilities among state and local disability systems *at the point of delivery*. Through competitive grants, BRIDGE will help people with disabilities access all of the services they need to find and keep employment through a single point of entry, rather than having to sort through a dizzying bureaucracy on their own. BRIDGE will also foster effective integration of service delivery so that different agencies with related missions will work together to achieve their common goal: employment of adults with disabilities.

Background

According to the 1998 Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, two-thirds of individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are not working. Only three in ten working-age adults with disabilities are employed full or part-time. Seventy-five percent of those non-employed adults with disabilities have indicated that they would prefer to be working (Harris Survey, 1998.) The vast majority of these individuals receive income support and other services through federal, state, and local programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Medicaid (including Medicaid waiver programs), Medicare, mental health services, vocational rehabilitation, subsidized housing, and food stamps.

Even though legislation, technology, and changes in societal attitudes have improved the environment for employment, fewer than 1% per year of the eight million SSI and SSDI beneficiaries actually return to work and terminate benefits. In fact, over the past decade, the total number of SSI and SSDI disability beneficiaries has doubled and federal cash payments to these individuals have steadily increased to more than \$75 billion annually (SSA, 1998). The costs of related Medicaid coverage also continues to escalate. These figures will continue to increase dramatically with the increased incidence of disability in an aging population, and the

migration of many Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients with disabilities from welfare to SSI/SSDI roles.

The Policy Problem

People with disabilities are a diverse population requiring a variety of services and supports to seek and retain employment. While a host of services and supports are currently provided by government, programs are dispersed among numerous departments and agencies. In addition, states and localities vary enormously in the structure, availability and effectiveness of their employment, health care, and other human services and support programs. For example, many states do not take full advantage of available authority to provide services that are vital to persons with disabilities returning to work, such as continued health care coverage, so that there may be a need for states to consider possible changes to their existing policies. Moreover, the current fragmented approach to supplying these needed services and programs has rendered them less effective in assisting adults with disabilities in finding and maintaining competitive employment. In addition, while the programs are intended to accomplish the same outcome --- that is, helping adults with disabilities become employed --- they frequently do not work well together.

Lack of service coordination and integration results in negative consequences for employers and service providers, both public and private. Most important, they do not have ready access to skilled and effective workers with disabilities. But they also find their efforts frequently wasted. For example, in some states, job counselors do not have access to job listings from agencies that administer employment and training programs. In addition, many different service providers (a vocational rehabilitation counselor, an employment training specialist, a supported employment job developer, or a representative from Projects With Industry) may all be independently contacting the same employer to develop employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. This results in duplication of effort, confusion, and complications in the relationship between the service providers and employers; the very relationship that is often critical to employment success.

Current Efforts

Currently, the Social Security Administration, and the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services have grant programs to develop and evaluate models of program coordination, service/systems integration and systems change to increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities at the state and local level. These agencies have published individual and joint grant announcements for competitive grant awards that have been made in FY 1998.

- The Social Security Administration, jointly funded with Health and Human Services/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Center for Mental

Health Services, is administering the "Cooperative Agreements for State Projects which Increase Employment of Individuals with Disabilities Who Receive Public Support."

- The Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) administers a Disability Employment and Initiatives grant program that fosters linkages with the One-Stop Center system, interagency coordination of multiple service needs, and is designed to support the objectives of Executive Order No. 13078 to increase employment of people with disabilities.
- The Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)/ Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), jointly funded with DOL/ETA, is administering "Systems-Change Projects to Expand Employment Opportunities for Individuals With Mental or Physical Disabilities, or Both, Who Receive Public Support."

The BRIDGE Initiative

BRIDGE will build on the grant programs described above, with a greater emphasis on single-point-of-entry or "one-stop" service for adults with disabilities seeking to find and keep a job. Each adult with a disability --- each "customer" --- seeking the services needed to succeed in competitive employment should be able learn about, receive advice about, and gain access to all of the necessary services with the least effort possible, preferably with a single call or office visit. Thereafter, each of the services provided to our customer should be sufficiently integrated with all of the other services so that they collectively accomplish the common goal of long-term employment and permanent attachment to the workforce. BRIDGE exemplifies new workforce system infrastructure approaches at the state and local level that promote universal access through One-Stop Centers, integrated service delivery, enhanced customer information, and choice to improve employment potential and opportunity.

BRIDGE will emphasize the need to focus on the point of the delivery of services and the need to be flexible and adapt to state and local conditions as well as ensure that needed services are available. For this reason, state and local agencies will be given the greatest leeway possible to assemble and organize consortiums that best serve their populations. Grant proposals will be designed to enhance service delivery with expanded wrap-around counseling, provision of information that can maximize scarce resources and employment outcomes, and other approaches that address customer and community barriers to employment by integrated and coordinated service delivery.

BRIDGE would be linked to the existing grant programs in that grant competitions under BRIDGE would incorporate any lessons learned in the existing programs. Further, grantees under the existing programs would be allowed to apply for additional funds to expand their current efforts. Finally, all applicants would be required to identify and discuss the implications of their proposed efforts to grants in their state or localities under the existing programs.

Target Population

Consortia of agencies providing services to individuals with mental or physical disabilities, or both, who are participants in federal, state, and/or local public support programs (e.g., TANF, SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, subsidized housing, and food stamps, etc.) will be eligible for grants under the BRIDGE program.

Eligible Applicants

Each applicant must be a consortium of state and/or local agencies that provide or could provide a range of supports and services to adults with disabilities which lead to finding and keeping employment. The agencies must have the legal authority to provide the services they propose. Consortia may include not-for-profit providers of employment, assistive technology, health and other related services to adults with disabilities.

Successful applicants would demonstrate that they have identified the means to integrate and coordinate the services provided across agencies and to remove barriers to employment for adults with disabilities. **Successful applicants would also demonstrate how they would ensure the continuation of health care coverage to persons with disabilities after the return to work.** Further, successful applicants would demonstrate that they consulted with diverse elements within the community of adults with disabilities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. Finally, successful applicants would demonstrate that they will match BRIDGE funds with appropriate federal, state, and/or local funds or in-kind services.

To be considered for a BRIDGE grant:

- Consortia must include the following five public agencies which must, in turn, contribute resources to the work of their consortia over the span of the grants:
 - Local and/or district offices of SSA
 - Medicaid/state medical assistance agencies
 - Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Regional Offices
 - State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies
 - Local Workforce Investment Boards/One-Stop Centers
- Applications will be given substantial additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes any of the following entities that demonstrate a commitment of resources to the work of the consortia:
 - State TANF agencies
 - Independent Living Centers
 - State developmental disability agencies
 - State mental retardation agencies
 - State mental health agencies
 - Vocational rehabilitation agencies for the blind and deaf

State/local transportation agencies, public transit authorities,
metropolitan planning organizations

- Applications will be given some additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes the following entities as formal partners (e.g., through MOUs or other types of formal agreements):
 - Educational institutions, agencies, and boards of education
 - Consumer organizations
 - Economic development agencies
 - Labor organizations
 - Private non-profit service providers
 - Protection advocacy agencies
 - Public housing authorities
 - Small business administration offices and/or small business development centers

Finally, up to 5 percent of the grant amount would be reserved for rigorous evaluation. Each applicant would have to demonstrate an ability and willingness to cooperate in a meaningful fashion in an overall evaluation of their coordination and integration efforts.

Allowable Activities

Allowable activities include those needed to achieve program integration and improved coordination of existing local, state and federal programs in the delivery of services to adults with disabilities and their achievement of self-sustaining employment and economic independence. Allowable activities include:

- planning, development and implementation of cooperative agreements, including service system planning, and development, planning and creation of core services structures;
- establishing partnerships among entities to provide integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services, such as transportation assistance;
- providing training amongst consortium partners and required partners under the Workforce Investment Act to increase knowledge and awareness of incentives, available services, and health care waiver provisions, and to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system;
- comprehensive pre-service assistance, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act and information on the array of available services to individuals with disabilities that increase the ability to obtain and retain employment;
- developing and implementing procedures that promote a “single point of entry” or “one-stop service delivery” such as common intake, coordination of customer data bases,

customer service hotlines, and access to information resources through technology or staff assistance;

- establishing linkages of consortium partners with services provided through One-Stop Center system, under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, to ensure comprehensive and coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;
- establishing linkages with other providers of services that people with disabilities may need to find and keep gainful employment, including local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community based organizations, and educational institutions;
- implementing accessible information technology linkages between programs and infrastructures, such as provided in One-Stop Centers that provide labor market, skill requirements, job listings and available training providers. Available funding for information technology infrastructure development and implementation will be limited to 20%, with any additional support funded by respective consortium partners; and
- evaluation of program or activities funded by BRIDGE grants.

With the exception of pre-service assistance, BRIDGE funds can not be used for direct services and direct services must be provided by the local, state and/or federally funded program available for that purpose. The intent of BRIDGE is to make these services readily accessible and comprehensible to the consumer.

Availability of Funding

BRIDGE grants would be awarded from a national account of \$150 million in FY 2000. Grants would last for five years with funding in FY 2001 and FY 2002 contingent upon subsequent appropriations. Current funding for traditional disability employment programs would not be supplanted by this initiative.

Expected Outcomes

These grants will produce a diverse array of integrated and coordinated service systems in states and local areas across the country that will effect the following. Some of the expected outcomes will include the following:

Adults with disabilities will:

- enter into gainful employment within a competitive work environment at a higher rate of pay than they receive currently;

- more easily and rapidly access a wider and more diverse array of employment services resulting in efficient and rapid job placement that will improve job skills, job opportunities, job placement, and job retention for adults with disabilities;
- be more satisfied with employment and related support services;
- have more input concerning their life goals and career plans;
- have more choices with respect to employment and career decisions;
- be more readily accommodated within the work force;
- have a better understanding of work incentive provisions; and
- report that their quality of life has improved.

State and local service delivery systems will:

- be less fragmented, have improved communication across systems, and be more efficient by decreasing duplication of services;
- be more user friendly and customer oriented;
- be more cost-effective than services provided in less integrated delivery service systems;
- systematically decrease barriers to employment of adults with disabilities at state and local levels (e.g. lack of: transportation, health care/insurance, education, workforce training, housing, assistive technology, civil rights, on-site and off-site job accommodations and long-term follow-along supports);
- increase the use of Medicaid waivers and individual waivers of SSA eligibility and income requirements; and
- realize substantial cost savings in terms of reducing the costs of public benefit programs.

Attachment: Proposed Legislative Language for Allowable Activities

SEC. ____ . AUTHORIZED BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES.--

(a) Systems Change Grants.-- Funds made available from appropriations for carrying out this Act may be used to provide assistance pursuant to grants or contracts with eligible entities in each State for--

(1) the establishment of partnerships utilizing existing local, State, and Federal resources for the purpose of achieving the coordinated provision of integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services for adults with disabilities;

(2) the planning, development, and implementation of cooperative agreements among consortium members establishing such new partnerships;

(3) making arrangements to link such services with local one-stop delivery systems under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in a manner that comprehensively supports coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;

(4) the provision of training and technical assistance to consortium partners under this Act and to all components of the Statewide workforce investment system under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in order--

(A) to increase awareness of the availability of and the eligibility requirements for employment-related benefits, services, and training for adults with disabilities; and

(B) to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities in the State through improved understanding and knowledge of program accessibility needs and requirements;

(5) the development and implementation of procedures designed to enhance the provision of services for adults with disabilities through such means as common intake, resource information and assistance (including assistance in resume preparation and career development, and information on employment-related services, programs, and benefits), the development of customer databases and customer service hotlines, and appropriate employment-related counseling and referrals, utilizing single point-of-entry systems involving appropriate electronic and staff assistance;

(6) the development of information systems that link consortium partners with the Statewide workforce investment system and with national, State, and local labor market information resources, including employment statistics and information on job vacancies;

(7) the establishment of linkages with other providers of services that adults with disabilities may need in order to find and keep gainful employment, including such providers as local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community-based organizations, and educational institutions;

(8) the establishment of arrangements for the provision of comprehensive pre-service assistance for individuals with disabilities, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act, and information on the array of available services, including transportation assistance and subsidies; and

(9) evaluation of programs or activities funded under this Act.

(b) IMPROVED SERVICES TO BETTER SERVE TARGETED POPULATIONS. --

In order to better serve targeted sub-populations among adults with disabilities, funds made available from appropriations for carrying out this Act may be used to provide assistance pursuant to grants or contracts--

(1) to enable a State's publicly-funded entities serving specific sub-populations of adults with disabilities (including individuals who are blind or deaf, or have psychiatric or developmental disabilities, and others) to provide training and technical assistance to consortium partners, relating to the specific needs and barriers faced by their clients;

(2) to identify and implement systems changes that address unique barriers to employment for targeted sub-populations, including--

(A) linkages and improved access to transportation for those with mobility impairments;

(B) resolution of housing issues facing those experiencing de-institutionalization or loss of public housing support; and

(C) other barriers to entry into employment and job retention; and

(3) to identify and implement service delivery approaches for targeted sub-populations that bridge or cut across the relevant State systems, in order to address specific barriers confronting such sub-populations.

(c) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.-- Not to exceed 20 percent of the amounts available for grants or contracts under this section may be used for the acquisition of computer hardware and software to facilitate linking or consolidating information or services provided by existing State, local, and Federal providers.

10/16

Susan Daniels / SSA
Marie Strahan

- To run program need a discretionary grant shop to run RFP / competition
- Not the kind of thing SSA has
- Doesn't have that kind of infrastructure
- Unless there was interest in having focused grants on certain SSA population

Thinks Dept of Labor has more of a discretionary grant capacity than SSA or Dept of Ed → do state and local

HHS not employment focused enough

Another advantage of having Calver as lead \rightarrow they have a long way to go to make their general programs more accessible

Recommendation:

Susan Daniel

1) methodology + data for each grantee done by external contracted out grantee (for SSAs program)

2) fee: \$ for evaluation be set aside in a program office external to project themselves

3) program office also
does technical assistance
→ first steps on programs
that way program can use

Wouldn't argue against small
amt for specific population

→ \$5 mi educ
school to work

→ specific SSA

\$5 mi to increase then
current program

→ probability of intragovt
agreements for funding

Task Force could provide intragovt
policy guidance

Bob Williams

10/16

↳ We should think about merging this w/ Kennedy - Jeffords

→ If we did that, then HHS would need to play a more central role

all separate program

↳ He thinks there's value in having Labor take the lead role but having something ~~with~~ similar to school to work management team

Why not education and why labor

- ↳ would ~~be~~ send the strong message the Amer w/ dis are and should be a part of the labor force
- ↳ Dept of Labor needs to take on this challenge
- ↳ For education
 - making sure Y.P. w/ dis enter the workforce
 - not emphasized in BR/D66 or K-Q

Maybe merge is the wrong
word but we need to make
one

Judy Heumann, Dept of Ed

10/16

* We need to make sure there's intragovernmental collaboration + lack of confusion in the field

→ Need to reorganize

→ build

→ Task Force is a short-term entity
→ Don't want to build

→ Need to integrate into programs themselves / not political

→ Joint \$s make people collaborate better

Different agencies focus on different themes

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. note	Rice notes re: Employment resources for people with disabilities (partial) (1 page)	10/16/98	P6/b(6), b(6)

**This marker identifies the original location of the withdrawn item listed above.
For a complete list of items withdrawn from this folder, see the
Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet at the front of the folder.**

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Cynthia Rice (Subject Files)
OA/Box Number: 15429

FOLDER TITLE:

Disability-BRIDGE I [2]

rx38

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advise between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

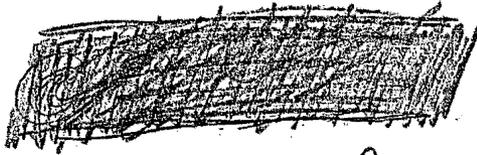
Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Options

① Board from all agencies or
Grant review comtee from all agencies

② Language saying shall collaborate



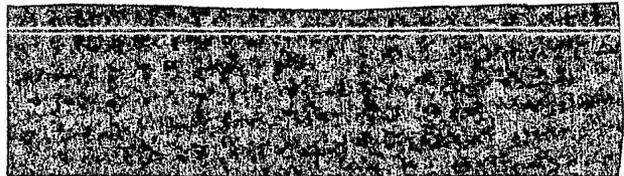
→ If a problem comes up, how will they get help?

→ Need to do

- identify businesses

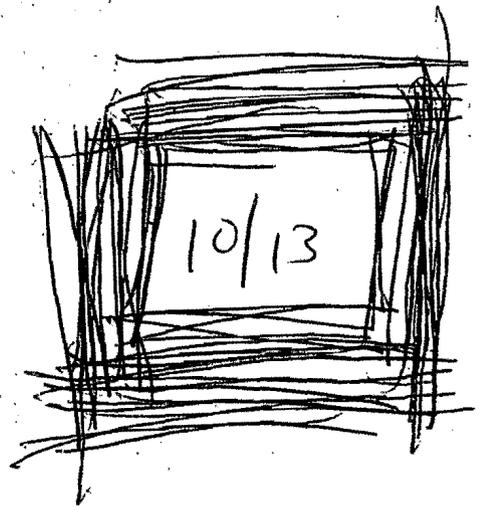
→

Judy Hen
mama



Ques

specific subpops vs
general system change



Seth -

why DOL should be lead

- (1) should coordinate w/ one stop
who should pay a certain
- (2) (has been a lot of criticism
of DOL not strong enough
people w/ disabilities)
→ would bring

→ would discipline
job training system
- (3) Set agenda to chain Task Force
→ if put elsewhere
would be stop on the

Education is likeliest to sign up + make the case

October 15, 1998

Note to Bob Williams, HHS

From: Cynthia Rice, White House

cc: Ceci Rouse, Lori Schack

In preparation for an NEC/DPC deputies meeting on the proposed BRIDGE program, Ceci, Lori and I would like to talk to you about two issues:

- 1) Which agency or agencies should the BRIDGE funding go to?
(We are having separate conversations with each agency about this.)
- 2) How strongly do you feel that TANF should be a mandatory member of the consortium?

I suggested to your office that we have a half hour phone conversation tomorrow (Friday), but if you would like to propose another mode of communication let me know. On Friday, 11-1, 2-2:30 and 5-5:30 will not work.

My fax number is 456-7431, email is cynthia_a_rice@oa.eop.gov and my phone number is 456-2846.

TITLE III--PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIAL PROJECTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

Sec. 301. Declaration of Purpose and Competitive Basis of Grants and Contracts

(a) Purpose

It is the purpose of this title to authorize grants and contracts to--

(1)(A) provide academic training to ensure that skilled personnel are available to provide rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities through vocational, medical, social, and psychological rehabilitation programs (including supported employment programs), through economic and business development programs, through independent living services programs, and through client assistance programs; and

(B) provide training to maintain and upgrade basic skills and knowledge of personnel (including personnel specifically trained to deliver services to individuals with disabilities whose employment outcome is self-employment or telecommuting) employed to provide state-of-the-art service delivery and rehabilitation technology services;

(2) conduct special projects and demonstrations that expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation and other services (including those services provided through community rehabilitation programs) authorized under this Act, or that otherwise further the purposes of this Act, including related research and evaluation;

(3) provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities who are migrant or seasonal farmworkers;

(4) initiate recreational programs to provide recreational activities and related experiences for individuals with disabilities to aid such individuals in employment, mobility, socialization, independence, and community integration; and

(5) provide training and information to individuals with disabilities and the individuals' representatives, and other appropriate parties to develop the skills necessary for individuals with disabilities to gain access to the rehabilitation system and statewide workforce investment systems and to become active decisionmakers in the rehabilitation process.

(b) Competitive Basis of Grants and Contracts

The Secretary shall ensure that all grants and contracts are awarded under this title on a competitive basis.

Sec. 302. Training

(a) Grants and Contracts for Personnel Training

(1) Authority

The Commissioner shall make grants to, and enter into contracts with, States and public or nonprofit agencies and organizations (including institutions of higher education) to pay part of the cost of projects to provide training, traineeships, and related activities, including the provision of technical assistance, that are designed to assist in increasing the numbers of, and upgrading the skills of, qualified personnel (especially rehabilitation counselors) who are trained in providing vocational, medical, social, and psychological rehabilitation services, who are trained to assist individuals with communication and related disorders, who are trained to provide other services provided under this Act, to individuals with disabilities, and who may include--

(A) personnel specifically trained in providing employment assistance to individuals with disabilities through job development and job placement services;

(B) personnel specifically trained to identify, assess, and meet the individual rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, including needs for rehabilitation technology;

(C) personnel specifically trained to deliver services to individuals who may benefit from receiving independent living services;

(D) personnel specifically trained to deliver services in the client assistance programs;

(E) personnel specifically trained to deliver services, through supported employment programs, to individuals with a most significant disability; and

(F) personnel specifically trained to deliver services to individuals with disabilities pursuing self-employment, business ownership, and telecommuting; and

(G) personnel trained in performing other functions necessary to the provision of vocational, medical, social, and psychological rehabilitation services, and other services provided under this Act.

(2) Authority to provide scholarships

Grants and contracts under paragraph (1) may be expended for scholarships and may include necessary stipends and allowances.

(3) Related federal statutes

In carrying out this subsection, the Commissioner may make grants to and enter into contracts with States and public or nonprofit agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, to furnish training regarding provisions of Federal statutes, including section 504, title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12111 et seq.), and the provisions of titles II and XVI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401 et seq. and 1381 et seq.), that are related to work incentives for individuals with disabilities.

(4) Training for statewide workforce systems personnel

The Commissioner may make grants to and enter into contracts under this subsection with States and public or nonprofit agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, to furnish training to personnel providing services to individuals with disabilities under title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. Under this paragraph, personnel may be trained--

(A) in evaluative skills to determine whether an individual with a disability may be served by the State vocational rehabilitation program or another component of a statewide workforce investment system; or

(B) to assist individuals with disabilities seeking assistance through one-stop delivery systems described in section 134(c) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

(5) Joint funding

Training and other activities provided under paragraph (4) for personnel may be jointly funded with the Department of Labor, using funds made available under title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

(b) Grants and Contracts for Academic Degrees and Academic Certificate Granting Training Projects

(1) Authority

(A) In general

The Commissioner may make grants to, and enter into contracts with, States and public or nonprofit agencies and organizations (including institutions of higher education) to pay part of the costs of academic training projects to provide training that leads to an academic degree or academic certificate. In making such grants or entering into such contracts, the Commissioner shall target funds to areas determined under subsection (e) to have shortages of qualified personnel.

(B) Types of projects

Academic training projects described in this subsection may include--

(i) projects to train personnel in the areas of assisting and supporting individuals with disabilities pursuing self-employment, business ownership, and telecommuting, and of vocational rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation technology, rehabilitation medicine, rehabilitation nursing, rehabilitation social work, rehabilitation psychiatry, rehabilitation psychology, rehabilitation dentistry, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology and audiology, physical education, therapeutic recreation, community rehabilitation programs, or prosthetics and orthotics;

(ii) projects to train personnel to provide--

(I) services to individuals with specific disabilities or individuals with disabilities who have specific impediments to rehabilitation, including individuals who are members of populations that are unserved or underserved by programs under this Act;

(II) job development and job placement services to individuals with disabilities;

(III) supported employment services, including services of employment specialists for individuals with disabilities;

(IV) specialized services for individuals with significant disabilities; or

(V) recreation for individuals with disabilities;

(iii) projects to train personnel in other fields contributing to the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities; and

(iv) projects to train personnel in the use, applications, and benefits of rehabilitation technology.

(2) Application

No grant shall be awarded or contract entered into under this subsection unless the applicant has submitted to the Commissioner an application at such time, in such form, in accordance with such procedures, and including such information as the Secretary may require, including--

(A) a description of how the designated State unit or units will participate in the project to be funded under the grant or contract, including, as appropriate, participation on advisory committees, as practicum sites, in curriculum development, and in other ways so as to build closer relationships between the applicant and the designated State unit and to encourage students to pursue careers in public vocational rehabilitation programs;

(B) the identification of potential employers that provide employment that meets the requirements of paragraph (5)(A)(i); and

(C) an assurance that data on the employment of graduates or trainees who participate in the project is accurate.

(3) Limitation

(A) In general

Except as provided in subparagraph (B), no grant or contract under this subsection may be used to provide any one course of study to an individual for a period of more than 4 years.

(B) Exception

If a grant or contract recipient under this subsection determines that an individual has a disability which seriously affects the completion of training under this subsection, the grant or contract recipient may extend the period referred to in subparagraph (A).

(4) Authority to provide scholarships

Grants and contracts under paragraph (1) may be expanded to provide services that include the provision of scholarships and necessary stipends and allowances.

(5) Agreements

(A) Contents

A recipient of a grant or contract under this subsection shall provide assurances to the Commissioner that each individual who receives a scholarship, for any academic year beginning after June 1, 1992, utilizing funds provided under such grant or contract shall enter into an agreement with the recipient under which the individual shall--

(i) maintain employment--

(I) in a nonprofit rehabilitation agency or related agency or in a State rehabilitation agency or related agency, including a professional corporation or professional practice group through which the individual has a service arrangement with the designated State agency;

(II) on a full- or part-time basis; and

(III) for a period of not less than the full-time equivalent of 2 years for each year for which assistance under this section was received by the individual, within a period, beginning after the recipient completes the training for which the scholarship was awarded, of not more than the sum of the number of years in the period described in subclause (III) and 2 additional years; and

(ii) repay all or part of any scholarship received, plus interest, if the individual does not fulfill the requirements of clause (i), except as the Commissioner by regulation may provide for repayment exceptions and deferrals.

(B) Enforcement

The Commissioner shall be responsible for the enforcement of each agreement entered into under subparagraph (A) upon completion of the training involved under such subparagraph.

(c) Grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities

The Commissioner, in carrying out this section, shall make grants to historically Black colleges and universities and other institutions of higher education whose minority student enrollment is at least 50 percent of the total enrollment of the institution.

(d) Application

A grant may not be awarded to a State or other organization under this section unless the State or organization has submitted an application to the Commissioner at such time, in such form, in accordance with such procedures, and containing such information as the Commissioner may require. Any such application shall include a detailed description of strategies that will be utilized to recruit and train individuals so as to reflect the diverse populations of the United States as part of the effort to increase the number of individuals with disabilities, and individuals who are from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds, who are available to provide rehabilitation services.

(e) Evaluation and Collection of Data

The Commissioner shall evaluate the impact of the training programs conducted under this section, and collect information on the training needs of, and data on shortages of qualified personnel necessary to provide services to individuals with disabilities. The Commissioner shall prepare and submit to Congress, by September 30 of each fiscal year, a report setting forth and justifying in detail how the funds made available for training under this section for the fiscal year prior to such submission are allocated by professional discipline and other program areas. The report shall also contain findings on such personnel shortages, how funds proposed for the succeeding fiscal year will be allocated under the President's budget proposal, and how the findings on personnel shortages justify the allocations.

(f) Grants for the Training of Interpreters

(1) Authority

(A) In general

For the purpose of training a sufficient number of qualified interpreters to meet the communications needs of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and individuals who are deaf-blind, the Commissioner, acting through a Federal office responsible for deafness and communicative disorders, may award grants to public or private nonprofit agencies or organizations to pay part of the costs--

(i) for the establishment of interpreter training programs; or

(ii) to enable such agencies or organizations to provide financial assistance for ongoing interpreter training programs.

(B) Geographic areas

The Commissioner shall award grants under this subsection for programs in geographic areas throughout the United States that the Commissioner considers appropriate to best carry out the objectives of this section.

(C) Priority

In awarding grants under this subsection, the Commissioner shall give priority to public or private nonprofit agencies or organizations with existing programs that have a demonstrated capacity for providing interpreter training services.

(D) Funding The Commissioner may award grants under this subsection through the use of--

(i) amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

(ii) pursuant to an agreement with the Director of the Office of the Special Education Program (established under section 603 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (as amended by section 101 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (Public Law 105-17))), amounts appropriated under section 686 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

(2) Application

A grant may not be awarded to an agency or organization under paragraph (1) unless the agency or organization has submitted an application to the Commissioner at such time, in such form, in accordance with such procedures, and containing such information as the Commissioner may require, including--

(A) a description of the manner in which an interpreter training program will be developed and operated during the 5-year period following the date on which a grant is received by the applicant under this subsection;

(B) a demonstration of the applicant's capacity or potential for providing training for interpreters for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and individuals who are deaf-blind;

(C) assurances that any interpreter trained or retrained under a program funded under the grant will meet such minimum standards of competency as the Commissioner may establish for purposes of this subsection; and

(D) such other information as the Commissioner may require.

(g) Technical Assistance and In-Service Training

(1) Technical assistance

The Commissioner is authorized to provide technical assistance to State designated agencies and community rehabilitation programs, directly or through contracts with State designated agencies or nonprofit organizations.

(2) Compensation

An expert or consultant appointed or serving under contract pursuant to this section shall be compensated at a rate, subject to approval of the Commissioner, that shall not exceed the daily equivalent of the rate of pay for level 4 of the Senior Executive Service Schedule under section 5382 of title 5, United States Code. Such an expert or consultant may be allowed travel and transportation expenses in accordance with section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) In-service training of rehabilitation personnel

(A) Projects

Subject to subparagraph (B), at least 15 percent of the sums appropriated to carry out this section shall be allocated to designated State agencies to be used, directly or indirectly, for projects for in-service training for rehabilitation personnel, consistent with the needs identified through the comprehensive system for personnel development required by section 101(a)(7), including projects designed--

(i) to address recruitment and retention of qualified rehabilitation professionals;

(ii) to provide for succession planning;

(iii) to provide for leadership development and capacity building; and

(iv) for fiscal years 1999 and 2000, to provide training regarding the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the amendments to this Act made by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998.

(B) Limitation

If the allocation to designated State agencies required by subparagraph (A) would result in a lower level of funding for projects being carried out on the date of enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 by other recipients of funds under this section, the Commissioner may allocate less than 15 percent of the sums described in subparagraph (A) to designated State agencies for such in-service training.

(h) Provision of Information

The Commissioner, subject to the provisions of section 306, may require that recipients of grants or contracts under this section provide information, including data, with regard to the impact of activities funded under this section.

(i) Authorization of Appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003.

Sec. 303. Demonstration and Training Programs

(a) Demonstration Projects To Increase Client Choice

(1) Grants

The Commissioner may make grants to States and public or nonprofit agencies and organizations to pay all or part of the costs of projects to demonstrate ways to increase client choice in the rehabilitation process, including the selection of providers of vocational rehabilitation services.

(2) Use of funds

An entity that receives a grant under this subsection shall use the grant only--

(A) for activities that are directly related to planning, operating, and evaluating the demonstration projects; and

(B) to supplement, and not supplant, funds made available from Federal and non-Federal sources for such projects.

3) Application

Any eligible entity that desires to receive a grant under this subsection shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information and assurances as the Commissioner may require, including--

(A) a description of--

(i) how the entity intends to promote increased client choice in the rehabilitation process, including a description, if appropriate, of how an applicant will determine the cost of any service or product offered to an eligible client;

(ii) how the entity intends to ensure that any vocational rehabilitation service or related services provided by a qualified provider who is accredited or meets such other quality assurance and cost-control criteria as the State may establish; and

(iii) the outreach activities to be conducted by the applicant to obtain eligible clients; and

(B) assurances that a written plan will be established with the full participation of the client, which plan shall, at a minimum, include--

(i) a statement of the vocational rehabilitation goals to be achieved;

(ii) a statement of the specific vocational rehabilitation services to be provided, the projected dates for their initiation, and the anticipated duration of each such service; and

(iii) objective criteria, an evaluation procedure, and a schedule, for determining whether such goals are being achieved.

(4) Award of grants

In selecting entities to receive grants under paragraph (1), the Commissioner shall take into consideration--

(A) the diversity of strategies used to increase client choice; including selection among qualified service providers;

(B) the geographic distribution of projects; and

(C) the diversity of clients to be served.

(5) Records

Entities that receive grants under paragraph (1) shall maintain such records as the Commissioner may require and comply with any request from the Commissioner for such records.

(6) Direct services

At least 80 percent of the funds awarded for any project under this subsection shall be used for direct services, as specifically chosen by eligible clients.

(7) Evaluation

The Commissioner may conduct an evaluation of the demonstration projects with respect to the services provided, clients served, client outcomes obtained, implementation issues addressed, the cost-effectiveness of the project, and the effects of increased choice on clients and service providers. The Commissioner may reserve funds for the evaluation for a fiscal year from the amounts appropriated to carry out projects under this section for the fiscal year.

(8) Definitions

For the purposes of this subsection:

(A) Direct services

The term "direct services" means vocational rehabilitation services, as described in section 103(a).

(B) Eligible client

The term "eligible client" means an individual with a disability, as defined in section 7(20)(A), who is not currently receiving services under an individualized plan for employment established through a designated State unit.

(b) Special Demonstration Programs

(1) Grants; contracts

The Commissioner, subject to the provisions of section 306, may provide grants to, or enter into contracts with, eligible entities to pay all or part of the cost of programs that expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation and other services authorized under this Act or that further the purposes of the Act, including related research and evaluation activities.

(2) Eligible entities; terms and conditions

(A) Eligible entities

To be eligible to receive a grant, or enter into a contract, under paragraph (1), an entity shall be a State vocational rehabilitation agency, community rehabilitation program, Indian tribe or tribal organization, or other public or nonprofit agency or organization, or as the Commissioner determines appropriate, a for-profit organization. The Commissioner may limit competitions to 1 or more types of organizations described in this subparagraph.

(B) Terms and conditions

A grant or contract under paragraph (1) shall contain such terms and conditions as the Commissioner may require.

(3) Application

An eligible entity that desires to receive a grant, or enter into a contract, under paragraph (1) shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such form, and containing such information and assurances as the Commissioner may require, including, if the Commissioner determines appropriate, a description of how the proposed project or demonstration program--

(A) is based on current research findings, which may include research conducted by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, the National Institutes of Health, and other public or private organizations; and

(B) is of national significance.

(4) Types of projects

The programs that may be funded under this subsection may include--

(A) special projects and demonstrations of service delivery;

(B) model demonstration projects;

(C) technical assistance projects;

(D) systems change projects;

(E) special studies and evaluations; and

(F) dissemination and utilization activities.

(5) Priority for competitions

(A) In general

In announcing competitions for grants and contracts under this subsection, the Commissioner shall give priority consideration to--

(i) special projects and demonstration programs of service delivery for adults who are either low-functioning and deaf or low-functioning and hard of hearing;

(ii) supported employment, including community-based supported employment programs to meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities or to provide technical assistance to States and community organizations to improve and expand the provision of supported employment services; and

(iii) model transitional planning services for youths with disabilities.

(B) Additional competitions: In announcing competitions for grants and contracts under this subsection, the Commissioner may require that applicants address 1 or more of the following:

(i) Age ranges.

(ii) Types of disabilities.

(iii) Types of services.

(iv) Models of service delivery.

(v) Stage of the rehabilitation process.

(vi) The needs of underserved populations, unserved and underserved areas, individuals with significant disabilities, low-incidence disability population or individuals residing in federally designated empowerment zones and enterprise communities.

(vii) Expansion of employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

(viii) Systems change projects to promote meaningful access of individuals with disabilities to employment-related services under title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and under other Federal laws.

(ix) Innovative methods of promoting achievement of high-quality employment outcomes.

(x) The demonstration of the effectiveness of early intervention activities in improving

employment outcomes.

(xi) Alternative methods of providing affordable transportation services to individuals with disabilities who are employed, seeking employment, or receiving vocational rehabilitation services from public or private organizations and who reside in geographic areas in which public transportation or paratransit service is not available.

(6) Use of funds for continuation awards

The Commissioner may use funds made available to carry out this section for continuation awards for projects that were funded under sections 12 and 311 (as such sections were in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998).

(c) Parent Information and Training Program

(1) Grants

The Commissioner is authorized to make grants to private nonprofit organizations for the purpose of establishing programs to provide training and information to enable individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or other authorized representatives of the individuals to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living, and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities. Such grants shall be designed to meet the unique training and information needs of the individuals described in the preceding sentence, who live in the area to be served, particularly those who are members of populations that have been unserved or underserved by programs under this Act.

(2) Use of grants

An organization that receives a grant to establish training and information programs under this subsection shall use the grant to assist individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of the individuals--

(A) to better understand vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs and services;

(B) to provide followup support for transition and employment programs;

(C) to communicate more effectively with transition and rehabilitation personnel and other relevant professionals;

(D) to provide support in the development of the individualized plan for employment;

(E) to provide support and expertise in obtaining information about rehabilitation and independent living programs, services, and resources that are appropriate; and

(F) to understand the provisions of this Act, particularly provisions relating to employment, supported employment, and independent living.

(3) Award of grants

The Commissioner shall ensure that grants under this subsection--

(A) shall be distributed geographically to the greatest extent possible throughout all States; and

(B) shall be targeted to individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of the individuals, in both urban and rural areas or on a State or regional basis.

(4) Eligible organizations

In order to receive a grant under this subsection, an organization--

(A) shall submit an application to the Commissioner at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Commissioner may require, including information demonstrating the capacity and expertise of the organization--

(i) to coordinate training and information activities with Centers for Independent Living;

(ii) to coordinate and work closely with parent training and information centers established pursuant to section 682(a) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (as added by section 101 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997; Public Law 105-17); and

(iii) to effectively conduct the training and information activities authorized under this subsection;

(B)(i) shall be governed by a board of directors--

(I) that includes professionals in the field of vocational rehabilitation; and

(II) on which a majority of the members are individuals with disabilities or the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of the individuals; or

(ii)(I) shall have a membership that represents the interests of individuals with disabilities; and

(II) shall establish a special governing committee that meets the requirements specified in subclauses (I) and (II) of clause (i) to operate a training and information program under this

subsection; and

(C) shall serve individuals with a full range of disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of the individuals.

(5) Consultation

Each organization carrying out a program receiving assistance under this subsection shall consult with appropriate agencies that serve or assist individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of the individuals, located in the jurisdiction served by the program.

(6) Coordination

The Commissioner shall provide coordination and technical assistance by grant or cooperative agreement for establishing, developing, and coordinating the training and information programs. To the extent practicable, such assistance shall be provided by the parent training and information centers established pursuant to section 682(a) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (as added by section 101 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997; Public Law 105-17).

(7) Review

(A) Quarterly review

The board of directors or special governing committee of an organization receiving a grant under this subsection shall meet at least once in each calendar quarter to review the training and information program, and each such committee shall directly advise the governing board regarding the views and recommendations of the committee.

(B) Review for grant renewal

If a nonprofit private organization requests the renewal of a grant under this subsection, the board of directors or the special governing committee shall prepare and submit to the Commissioner a written review of the training and information program conducted by the organization during the preceding fiscal year.

(d) Braille Training Programs

(1) Establishment

The Commissioner shall make grants to, and enter into contracts with, States and public or nonprofit agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, to pay all or

part of the cost of training in the use of braille for personnel providing vocational rehabilitation services or educational services to youth and adults who are blind.

(2) Projects

Such grants shall be used for the establishment or continuation of projects that may provide--

(A) development of braille training materials;

(B) in-service or pre-service training in the use of braille, the importance of braille literacy, and methods of teaching braille to youth and adults who are blind; and

(C) activities to promote knowledge and use of braille and nonvisual access technology for blind youth and adults through a program of training, demonstration, and evaluation conducted with leadership of experienced blind individuals, including the use of comprehensive, state-of-the-art technology.

(3) Application

To be eligible to receive a grant, or enter into a contract, under paragraph (1), an agency or organization shall submit an application to the Commissioner at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Commissioner may require.

(e) Authorization of Appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003.

Sec. 304. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

(a) Grants

(1) Authority

The Commissioner, subject to the provisions of section 306, may make grants to eligible entities to pay up to 90 percent of the cost of projects or demonstration programs for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities who are migrant or seasonal farmworkers, as determined in accordance with rules prescribed by the Secretary of Labor, and to the family members who are residing with such individuals (whether or not such family members are individuals with disabilities).

(2) Eligible entities

To be eligible to receive a grant under paragraph (1), an entity shall be--

(A) a State designated agency;

(B) a nonprofit agency working in collaboration with a State agency described in subparagraph

(A); or

(C) a local agency working in collaboration with a State agency described in subparagraph

(A).

(3) Maintenance and transportation

(A) In general

Amounts provided under a grant under this section may be used to provide for the maintenance of and transportation for individuals and family members described in paragraph (1) as necessary for the rehabilitation of such individuals.

(B) Requirement

Maintenance payments under this paragraph shall be provided in a manner consistent with any maintenance payments provided to other individuals with disabilities in the State under this Act.

(4) Assurance of cooperation

To be eligible to receive a grant under this section an entity shall provide assurances (satisfactory to the Commissioner) that in the provision of services under the grant there will be appropriate cooperation between the grantee and other public or nonprofit agencies and organizations having special skills and experience in the provision of services to migrant or seasonal farmworkers or their families.

(5) Coordination with other programs

The Commissioner shall administer this section in coordination with other programs serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including programs under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.), section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b), the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (29 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

(b) Authorization of Appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section, for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003.

Sec. 305. Recreational Programs

(a) Grants

(1) Authority

(A) In general

The Commissioner, subject to the provisions of section 306, shall make grants to States, public agencies, and nonprofit private organizations to pay the Federal share of the cost of the establishment and operation of recreation programs to provide individuals with disabilities with recreational activities and related experiences to aid in the employment, mobility, socialization, independence, and community integration of such individuals.

(B) Recreation programs

The recreation programs that may be funded using assistance provided under a grant under this section may include vocational skills development, leisure education, leisure networking, leisure resource development, physical education and sports, scouting and camping, 4-H activities, construction of facilities for aquatic rehabilitation therapy, music, dancing, handicrafts, art, and homemaking. When possible and appropriate, such programs and activities should be provided in settings with peers who are not individuals with disabilities.

(C) Design of program

Programs and activities carried out under this section shall be designed to demonstrate ways in which such programs assist in maximizing the independence and integration of individuals with disabilities.

(2) Maximum term of grant

A grant under this section shall be made for a period of not more than 3 years.

(3) Availability of nongrant resources

(A) In general

A grant may not be made to an applicant under this section unless the applicant provides

(B) Limitation

The Commissioner may not make financial assistance available to a grant recipient for a subsequent year until the Commissioner has received and evaluated the annual report of the recipient under subparagraph (A) for the current year.

(b) Authorization of Appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section, such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1999 through 2003.

Sec. 306. Measuring of Project Outcomes and Performance

The Commissioner may require that recipients of grants under this title submit information, including data, as determined by the Commissioner to be necessary to measure project outcomes and performance, including any data needed to comply with the Government Performance and Results Act.

assurances that, with respect to costs of the recreation program to be carried out under the grant, the applicant, to the maximum extent practicable, will make available non-Federal resources (in cash or in-kind) to pay the non-Federal share of such costs.

(B) Federal share

The Federal share of the costs of the recreation programs carried out under this section shall be--

(i) with respect to the first year in which assistance is provided under a grant under this section, 100 percent;

(ii) with respect to the second year in which assistance is provided under a grant under this section, 75 percent; and

(iii) with respect to the third year in which assistance is provided under a grant under this section, 50 percent.

(4) Application

To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a State, agency, or organization shall submit an application to the Commissioner at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Commissioner may require, including a description of--

(A) the manner in which the findings and results of the project to be funded under the grant, particularly information that facilitates the replication of the results of such projects, will be made generally available; and

(B) the manner in which the service program funded under the grant will be continued after Federal assistance ends.

(5) Level of services

Recreation programs funded under this section shall maintain, at a minimum, the same level of services over a 3-year project period.

(6) Reports by grantees

(A) Requirement

The Commissioner shall require that each recipient of a grant under this section annually prepare and submit to the Commissioner a report concerning the results of the activities funded under the grant.

Too much

DRAFT October 9, 1998

Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE)

Introduction

On March 13, 1998, the President issued Executive Order No. 13078 entitled "Increasing Employment of Adults with Disabilities." The Executive Order directs federal agencies and departments to create a coordinated and aggressive national policy to accomplish that goal. As part of the effort to fulfill the President's mandate, the Departments of Labor, Education, Transportation, Commerce, Veterans Affairs, and Health and Human Services along with the Social Security Administration and the Small Business Administration are proposing the "Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment" ("BRIDGE") Program.

BRIDGE will help to increase the employment rate of adults with disabilities by fostering integration of employment-related services and support services to adults with disabilities among state and local disability systems *at the point of delivery*. Through competitive grants, BRIDGE will help people with disabilities access all of the services they need to find and keep employment through a single point of entry, rather than having to sort through a dizzying bureaucracy on their own. BRIDGE will also foster effective integration of service delivery so that different agencies with related missions will work together to achieve their common goal: employment of adults with disabilities.

Background

According to the 1998 Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, two-thirds of individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are not working. Only three in ten working-age adults with disabilities are employed full or part-time. Seventy-five percent of those non-employed adults with disabilities have indicated that they would prefer to be working (Harris Survey, 1998.) The vast majority of these individuals receive income support and other services through federal, state, and local programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Medicaid (including Medicaid waiver programs), Medicare, mental health services, vocational rehabilitation, subsidized housing, and food stamps.

Even though legislation, technology, and changes in societal attitudes have improved the environment for employment, fewer than 1% per year of the eight million SSI and SSDI beneficiaries actually return to work and terminate benefits. In fact, over the past decade, the total number of SSI and SSDI disability beneficiaries has doubled and federal cash payments to these individuals have steadily increased to more than \$75 billion annually (SSA, 1998). The costs of

related Medicaid coverage also continues to escalate. These figures will continue to increase dramatically with the increased incidence of disability in an aging population, and the migration of many Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients with disabilities from welfare to SSI/SSDI roles.

The Policy Problem

People with disabilities are a diverse population requiring a variety of services and supports to seek and retain employment. While a host of services and supports are currently provided by government, programs are dispersed among numerous departments and agencies. In addition, states and localities vary enormously in the structure, availability and effectiveness of their employment, health care, and other human services and support programs. The current fragmented approach to supplying these needed services and programs has rendered them less effective in assisting adults with disabilities in finding and maintaining competitive employment. In addition, while the programs are intended to accomplish the same outcome --- that is, helping adults with disabilities become employed --- they frequently do not work well together.

Lack of service coordination and integration results in negative consequences for employers and service providers, both public and private. Most important, they do not have ready access to skilled and effective workers with disabilities. But they also find their efforts frequently wasted. For example, in some states, job counselors do not have access to job listings from agencies that administer employment and training programs. In addition, many different service providers (a vocational rehabilitation counselor, an employment training specialist, a supported employment job developer, or a representative from Projects With Industry) may all be independently contacting the same employer to develop employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. This results in duplication of effort, confusion, and complications in the relationship between the service providers and employers; the very relationship that is often critical to employment success.

Current Efforts

Currently, the Social Security Administration, and the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services have grant programs to develop and evaluate models of program coordination, service/systems integration and systems change to increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities at the state and local level. These agencies have published individual and joint grant announcements for competitive grant awards that have been made in FY 1998.

- The Social Security Administration, jointly funded with Health and Human Services/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Center

for Mental Health Services, is administering the "Cooperative Agreements for State Projects which Increase Employment of Individuals with Disabilities Who Receive Public Support."

- The Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) administers a Disability Employment and Initiatives grant program that fosters linkages with the One-Stop Center system, interagency coordination of multiple service needs, and is designed to support the objectives of Executive Order No. 13078 to increase employment of people with disabilities.
- The Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)/ Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), jointly funded with DOL/ETA, is administering "Systems-Change Projects to Expand Employment Opportunities for Individuals With Mental or Physical Disabilities, or Both, Who Receive Public Support."

The BRIDGE Initiative

BRIDGE will build on the grant programs described above, with a greater emphasis on single-point-of-entry or "one-stop" service for adults with disabilities seeking to find and keep a job. Each adult with a disability --- each "customer" --- seeking the services needed to succeed in competitive employment should be able learn about, receive advice about, and gain access to all of the necessary services with the least effort possible, preferably with a single call or office visit. Thereafter, each of the services provided to our customer should be sufficiently integrated with all of the other services so that they collectively accomplish the common goal of long-term employment and permanent attachment to the workforce. BRIDGE exemplifies new workforce system infrastructure approaches at the state and local level that promote universal access through One-Stop Centers, integrated service delivery, enhanced customer information, and choice to improve employment potential and opportunity.

BRIDGE will emphasize the need to focus on the point of the delivery of services and the need to be flexible and adapt to state and local conditions. For this reason, state and local agencies will be given the greatest leeway possible to assemble and organize consortiums that best serve their populations. Grant proposals will be designed to enhance service delivery through the ~~One-Stop Centers with~~ expanded wrap-around counseling, provision of information that can maximize scarce resources and employment outcomes, and other approaches that address customer and community barriers to employment by integrated and coordinated service delivery.

BRIDGE would be linked to the existing grant programs in that grant

competitions under BRIDGE would incorporate any lessons learned in the existing programs. Further, grantees under the existing programs would be allowed to apply for additional funds to expand their current efforts. Finally, all applicants would be required to identify and discuss the implications of their proposed efforts to grants in their state or localities under the existing programs.

Target Population

Consortia of agencies providing services to individuals with mental or physical disabilities, or both, who are participants in federal, state, and/or local public support programs (e.g., TANF, SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, subsidized housing, and food stamps, etc.) will be eligible for grants under the BRIDGE program.

Eligible Applicants

Each applicant must be a consortium of state and/or local agencies that provide or could provide a range of supports and services to adults with disabilities which lead to finding and keeping employment. The agencies must have the legal authority to provide the services they propose. Consortia may include not-for-profit providers of employment, assistive technology, health and other related services to adults with disabilities.

Successful applicants would demonstrate that they have identified the means to integrate and coordinate the services provided across agencies and to remove barriers to employment for adults with disabilities. Successful applicants would also demonstrate that they consulted with diverse elements within the community of adults with disabilities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. Finally, successful applicants would demonstrate that they will match BRIDGE funds with appropriate federal, state, and/or local funds. *in-kind OK*

Andy
To be considered for a BRIDGE grant:

- Consortia must include the following five public agencies which must, in turn, contribute resources to the work of their consortia over the span of the grants:

Local and/or district offices of SSA
Medicaid/state medical assistance agency
~~Veterans Administration Regional Office/Vocational and Counseling~~ *Dept of Veterans Affairs (VA)*
State Vocational Rehabilitation agency
Local Workforce Investment Board/One-Stop Centers

- Applications will be given substantial additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes any of the following entities that demonstrate a commitment of resources to the work of the consortia:

Andy
State TANF agency
Independent Living Centers
State developmental disability agency
State mental retardation agency
State mental health agency

- Am* Vocational rehabilitation for the blind and deaf
State/local transportation agency, public transit authority,
metropolitan planning organization
- Applications will be given some additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes the following entities as formal partners (e.g., through MOUs or other types of formal agreements):
 - Community colleges
 - Consumer organizations
 - Economic development agency
 - Education agency/boards of education
 - Labor organizations
 - Private non-profit service providers
 - Protection advocacy agency
 - Public housing authority
 - School-to-work agency
 - Small business administration office and/or small business development center
- [Signature]*

Finally, up to 5 percent of the grant amount would be reserved for rigorous evaluation. Each applicant would have to demonstrate an ability and willingness to cooperate in a meaningful fashion in an overall evaluation of their coordination and integration efforts.

Allowable Activities

Allowable activities include those needed to achieve program integration and improved coordination of existing local, state and federal programs in the delivery of services to adults with disabilities and their achievement of self-sustaining employment and economic independence. Allowable activities include:

- planning, development and implementation of cooperative agreements;
- establishing partnerships among entities to provide integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services, such as transportation assistance;
- providing training amongst consortium partners and required partners under the Workforce Investment Act to increase knowledge and awareness of incentives, available services, and health care waiver provisions, and to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system;
- comprehensive pre-service assistance, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act and information on the array of

available services to individuals with disabilities that increase the ability to obtain and retain employment;

- developing and implementing procedures that promote a "single point of entry" or "one-stop service delivery" such as common intake, coordination of customer data bases, customer service hotlines, and access to information resources through technology or staff assistance;
- establishing linkages of consortium partners with services provided through One-Stop Center system, under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, to ensure comprehensive and coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;
- establishing linkages with other providers of services that people with disabilities may need to find and keep gainful employment, including local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community based organizations, and educational institutions;
- ^{available} implementing information technology linkages to ~~One-Stop Center infrastructure~~ providing labor market, skill requirements, job listings and available training providers. Available funding for information technology infrastructure development and implementation will be limited to 20%, with any additional support funded by respective consortium partners; and
- evaluation of program or activities funded by BRIDGE grants.

With the exception of pre-service assistance, BRIDGE funds can not be used for direct services and direct services must be provided by the local, state and/or federally funded program available for that purpose. The intent of BRIDGE is to make these services readily accessible and comprehensible to the consumer.

Availability of Funding

BRIDGE grants would be awarded from a national account of \$150 million in FY 2000. Grants would last for three years with funding in FY 2001 and FY 2002 contingent upon subsequent appropriations. Current funding for traditional disability employment programs would not be supplanted by this initiative.

Expected Outcomes

These grants will produce a diverse array of integrated and coordinated service systems in states and local areas across the country that will effect the following. Some of the expected outcomes will include the following:

Adults with disabilities will:

- enter into gainful employment within a competitive work environment at a

- higher rate of pay than they receive currently;
- more easily and rapidly access a wider and more diverse array of employment services resulting in efficient and rapid job placement that will improve job skills, job opportunities, job placement, and job retention for adults with disabilities;
- be more satisfied with employment and related support services;
- have more input concerning their life goals and career plans;
- have more choices with respect to employment and career decisions;
- be more readily accommodated within the work force;
- have a better understanding of work incentive provisions; and
- report that their quality of life has improved.

State and local service delivery systems will:

- be less fragmented, have improved communication across systems, and be more efficient by decreasing duplication of services;
- be more user friendly and customer oriented;
- be more cost-effective than services provided in less integrated delivery service systems;
- systematically decrease barriers to employment of adults with disabilities at state and local levels (e.g. lack of: transportation, health care/insurance, education, workforce training, housing, assistive technology, civil rights, on-site and off-site job accommodations and long-term follow-along supports);
- increase the use of Medicaid waivers and individual waivers of SSA eligibility and income requirements; and
- realize substantial cost savings in terms of reducing the costs of public benefit programs.

Attachment: Proposed Legislative Language for Allowable Activities

SEC. ____ AUTHORIZED BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES.--

(a) Systems Change Grants.-- Funds made available from appropriations for carrying out this Act may be used to provide assistance pursuant to grants or contracts with eligible entities in each State for--

(1) the establishment of partnerships utilizing existing local, State, and Federal resources for the purpose of achieving the coordinated provision of integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services for adults with disabilities;

(2) the planning, development, and implementation of cooperative agreements among consortium members establishing such new partnerships;

(3) making arrangements to link such services with local one-stop delivery systems under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in a manner that comprehensively supports coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;

(4) the provision of training and technical assistance to consortium partners under this Act and to all components of the Statewide workforce investment system under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in order--

(A) to increase awareness of the availability of and the eligibility requirements for employment-related benefits, services, and training for adults with disabilities; and

(B) to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities in the State through improved understanding and knowledge of program accessibility needs and requirements;

(5) the development and implementation of procedures designed to enhance the provision of services for adults with disabilities through such means as common intake, resource information and assistance (including assistance in resume preparation and career development, and information on employment-related services, programs, and benefits), the development of customer databases and customer service hotlines, and appropriate employment-related counseling and referrals, utilizing single point-of-entry systems involving appropriate electronic and staff assistance;

(6) the development of information systems that link consortium partners with the Statewide workforce investment system and with national, State, and local labor market information resources, including employment statistics and information on job vacancies;

(7) the establishment of linkages with other providers of services that adults with disabilities may need in order to find and keep gainful employment, including such providers as local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community-based organizations, and educational institutions;

(8) the establishment of arrangements for the provision of comprehensive pre-service assistance for individuals with disabilities, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act, and information on the array of available services, including transportation assistance and subsidies; and

(9) evaluation of programs or activities funded under this Act.

(b) IMPROVED SERVICES TO BETTER SERVE TARGETED POPULATIONS. --

In order to better serve targeted sub-populations among adults with disabilities, funds made available from appropriations for carrying out this Act may be used to provide assistance pursuant to grants or contracts--

(1) to enable a State's publicly-funded entities serving specific sub-populations of adults with disabilities (including individuals who are blind or deaf, or have psychiatric or developmental disabilities, and others) to provide training and technical assistance to consortium partners, relating to the specific needs and barriers faced by their clients;

(2) to identify and implement systems changes that address unique barriers to employment for targeted sub-populations, including--

(A) linkages and improved access to transportation for those with mobility impairments;

(B) resolution of housing issues facing those experiencing de-institutionalization or loss of public housing support; and

(C) other barriers to entry into employment and job retention; and

(3) to identify and implement service delivery approaches for targeted sub-populations that bridge or cut across the relevant State systems, in order to address specific barriers confronting such sub-populations.

(c) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.-- Not to exceed 20 percent of the amounts available for grants or contracts under this section may be used for the acquisition of computer hardware and software to facilitate linking or consolidating information or services provided by existing State, local, and Federal providers.



**PRESIDENTIAL
TASK FORCE ON
EMPLOYMENT
OF ADULTS
WITH
DISABILITIES**

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FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL FORM

Date: October 13, 1998

Pages to Follow: 10

To: Cynthia Rice

From: Becky Ogle

Fax #: 456-7431

Tel #: 219-6081

Ofc: _____

Subj: BRIDGE program

Distribution:

- Normal
- Urgent/Hand Carry
- Confidential

Comments:

Attached is the latest draft that will be discussed at the meeting tomorrow, October 16 - 2:00pm - Room 239 - CEOB.

Thanks

Put Ability to Work!

DRAFT October 13, 1998

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Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment (BRIDGE)

Introduction

On March 13, 1998, the President issued Executive Order No. 13078 entitled "Increasing Employment of Adults with Disabilities." The Executive Order directs federal agencies and departments to create a coordinated and aggressive national policy to accomplish that goal. As part of the effort to fulfill the President's mandate, the Departments of Labor, Education, Transportation, Commerce, Veterans Affairs, and Health and Human Services along with the Social Security Administration and the Small Business Administration are proposing the "Building Resources for Individuals with Disabilities to Gain Employment" ("BRIDGE") Program.

BRIDGE will help to increase the employment rate of adults with disabilities by identifying service issues and addressing those issues in public policy at the state and local levels as a means of fostering integration of employment-related and support services to adults with disabilities. ~~Service coordination and integration will occur among state and local disability systems at the point of delivery. Through competitive grants, BRIDGE will help adults with disabilities access all of the services they need to find and keep employment rather than having to sort through a dizzying bureaucracy on their own. BRIDGE will foster effective integration of service delivery so that different agencies with related missions will work together to achieve their common goal: employment of adults with disabilities.~~

Background

According to the 1998 Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities, two-thirds of individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are not working. Only three in ten working-age adults with disabilities are employed full or part-time. Seventy-five percent of those non-employed adults with disabilities have indicated that they would prefer to be working (Harris Survey, 1998.) The vast majority of these individuals receive income support and other services through federal, state, and local programs like Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Medicaid (including Medicaid waiver programs), Medicare, mental health services, vocational rehabilitation, subsidized housing, and food stamps.

Even though legislation, technology, and changes in societal attitudes have improved the environment for employment, fewer than 1% per year of the eight million SSI and SSDI beneficiaries actually return to work and terminate benefits. In fact, over the past decade, the total number of SSI and SSDI disability beneficiaries has doubled and federal cash payments to these individuals have steadily increased to more than \$75 billion annually (SSA, 1998). The

cost of related Medicaid coverage also continues to escalate. These figures will continue to increase dramatically with the growing incidence of disability in an aging population, and the migration of many Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) recipients with disabilities from welfare to SSI/SSDI roles.

The Policy Problem

People with disabilities are a diverse population requiring a variety of services and supports to find and keep jobs. Although a host of services and supports are currently provided by to individuals seeking employment, states and local communities can not effectively provide many of the services critical to adults with disabilities seeking employment, such as affordable personal assistant services and affordable and appropriate health care. One reason for this is that programs are so widely dispersed among numerous departments and agencies that often do not communicate with each other. In addition, states and localities vary enormously in the structure, availability and effectiveness of their employment, health care, and other human services and support programs. The current fragmented approach to supplying these needed services and programs has rendered them less effective in assisting adults with disabilities in finding and maintaining competitive employment. In addition, while the programs are intended to accomplish the same outcome --- that is, employment for adults with disabilities --- they frequently do not work well together.

For example, adults with disabilities experience difficulty obtaining reliable information about employment opportunities and services, various work incentives, the myriad of state health care benefits under Medicaid, and the impact of work on their federal benefits status for SSI, SSDI, Medicaid and Medicare.

Lack of service coordination and integration results in negative consequences for employers and service providers, both public and private. Most important, they do not have ready access to skilled and effective workers with disabilities. But they also find their efforts to find workers with disabilities frequently wasted. For example, in some states, job counselors do not have access to job listings from agencies that administer employment and training programs. In addition, many different service providers (a vocational rehabilitation counselor, an employment training specialist, a supported employment job developer, or a representative from Projects With Industry) may all be independently contacting the same employer to develop employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. This results in duplication of effort, confusion, and complications in the relationship between the service providers and employer; the very relationship that is often critical to employment success.

Current Efforts

The Social Security Administration and the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services recently funded in FY 1998 grants programs to develop and evaluate

models of program coordination, service/systems integration and systems change to increase employment outcomes for people with disabilities at the state and local level.

- The Social Security Administration, in a project jointly funded with the Health and Human Services Department's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Center for Mental Health Services, is administering the "Cooperative Agreements for State Projects which Increase Employment of Individuals with Disabilities Who Receive Public Support."
- The Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) administers a Disability Employment and Initiatives grant program fostering linkages with the One-Stop Center system and interagency coordination of multiple service needs.
- The Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)/ Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), in a project jointly funded with DOL/ETA, is administering "Systems-Change Projects to Expand Employment Opportunities for Individuals With Mental or Physical Disabilities, or Both, Who Receive Public Support."

The BRIDGE Initiative

BRIDGE will build on the grants programs described above, with a greater emphasis on single-point-of-entry service for adults with disabilities seeking to find and keep a job. Each adult with a disability --- each "customer" --- seeking services needed to succeed in competitive employment should be able learn, receive advice, and gain access to all of the necessary services with the least effort possible, preferably with a single call or office visit. Thereafter, each of the services should be sufficiently integrated with all other necessary services to achieve the common goal of long-term employment and permanent attachment to the workforce. BRIDGE is consistent with the new workforce system infrastructure at the state and local level that will promote universal access through integrated service delivery, enhanced customer information, and greater choice to improve employment potential and opportunity.

BRIDGE will emphasize the need to focus on the point of the delivery of services and the need to be flexible and adapt to state and local conditions. For this reason, state and local agencies will be given the greatest leeway possible to assemble and organize consortiums that best serve their populations. Grant proposals will be designed to enhance service delivery through expanded wrap-around counseling, provision of information that can maximize scarce resources and employment outcomes, and other approaches that address customer and community barriers to employment through integrated and coordinated service delivery.

The selection process for the BRIDGE grants would take into account any lessons learned in the existing SSA, DOL, and DoEd grants programs. Further, grantees under the existing programs would be allowed to apply for additional funds to expand their current efforts. All

applicants would also be required to identify and discuss the implications of their proposed efforts to grants in their state or localities under the existing programs.

Target Population

Consortia of agencies providing services to individuals with mental or physical disabilities, or both, who are participants in federal, state, and/or local public support programs (e.g., TANF, SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, subsidized housing, and food stamps, etc.) will be eligible to compete for grants under the BRIDGE program.

Eligible Applicants

Each applicant must be a consortium of state and/or local agencies that provide or could provide a range of supports and services to adults with disabilities which lead to finding and keeping employment. The agencies must have the legal authority to provide the services they propose. Consortia may include not-for-profit providers of employment, assistive technology, health and other related services to adults with disabilities.

Successful applicants would demonstrate that they have identified the means to integrate and coordinate the services provided across agencies and to remove barriers to employment for adults with disabilities. Successful applicants would also demonstrate that they consulted with diverse elements within the community of adults with disabilities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the project. Finally, successful applicants would be judged, in part, on the extent to which they will match BRIDGE funds with appropriate federal, state, and/or local funds.

To be considered for a BRIDGE grant:

- Consortia must include the following five public agencies which must, in turn, contribute resources to the work of their consortia over the span of the grants:

Local and/or district offices of SSA

State Medicaid/state medical assistance agency

State Vocational Rehabilitation agency

Veterans Administration Regional Office/Vocational and Counseling

Local Workforce Investment Board/One-Stop Centers

- Applications will be given substantial additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes any of the following entities that demonstrate a commitment of cash or in-kind services to the work of their consortia:

Community colleges and universities

Economic development agency

> why this her?

~~Education agency/boards of education~~

Independent Living Centers

~~State developmental disability agency/mental retardation agency~~

State mental health agency

State TANF agency

State/local transportation agency/public transit authorities, metropolitan planning organization

- Applications will be given some additional credit in the selection process if the consortium includes the following entities as formal partners (e.g., through MOUs or other types of formal agreements):

Consumer organizations

Labor organizations

Private non-profit service providers

Protection and advocacy agency

Public housing authority

School-to-work agency

Small business administration district office and/or small business development center

Allowable Activities

Allowable activities include those needed to achieve program integration and improved coordination of existing local, state, and federal programs in the delivery of services to adults with disabilities and their achievement of self-sustaining employment and economic independence. Allowable activities include:

- ~~service system planning and development of modifications in state plans and state service systems;~~
- ~~use of state/local authority and federal systems to create core services structure, especially developing access to appropriate and affordable health care for individuals with disabilities who want to work;~~
- ~~policy analysis and identification of service gaps;~~
- ~~measuring quality and effectiveness of state and local systems and increasing efficiency, effectiveness, quality, and customer service outcomes;~~
- ~~integrating service delivery and improving service coordination by:~~

planning, development and implementation of cooperative agreements;

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establishing partnerships among entities to provide integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services, such as transportation assistance;

providing training among consortium partners and required partners under the Workforce Investment Act to increase knowledge and awareness of incentives, available services, and health care waiver provisions, and to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce investment system;

comprehensive pre-service assistance, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act and information on the array of available services to individuals with disabilities that increase the ability to obtain and retain employment;

developing and implementing procedures that promote common intake, coordination of customer data bases, customer service hotlines, and access to information resources through technology or staff assistance;

establishing linkages of consortium partners with services provided through One-Stop Center system, under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, to ensure comprehensive and coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;

establishing linkages with other providers of services that people with disabilities may need to find and keep gainful employment, including local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community based organizations, and educational institutions;

implementing information technology linkages to One-Stop Center infrastructure providing labor market, skill requirements, job listings and available training providers; however, available funding for information technology infrastructure development and implementation will be limited to 20%, with any additional support funded by respective consortium partners; and

- evaluation of program or activities funded by BRIDGE grants.

With the exception of pre-service assistance, BRIDGE funds can not be used for direct services and direct services must be provided by the local, state and/or federally funded program available for that purpose. The intent of BRIDGE is to make these services readily accessible and comprehensible to the consumer.

Availability of Funding

BRIDGE grants would be awarded from a national account of \$150 million in FY 2000. Grants would last for five years with funding in ~~FY 2001 thru FY 2004~~ contingent upon subsequent appropriations. Current funding for traditional disability employment programs would not be supplanted by this initiative.

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Expected Outcomes

Substitution
competitiveness?

These grants will produce a diverse array of integrated and coordinated service systems in states and local areas across the country that will effect the following. Some of the expected outcomes will include the following:

Adults with disabilities will:

- more easily and rapidly access a wider and more diverse array of employment services resulting in efficient and rapid job placement that will improve job skills, job opportunities, job placement, and job retention for adults with disabilities;
- enter into gainful employment within a competitive work environment at a higher rate of pay than they receive currently;
- have more choices with respect to employment and career decisions;
- have more input concerning their life goals and career plans;
- be more satisfied with employment and related support services;
- be more readily accommodated within the work force;
- have a better understanding of work incentive provisions; and
- report that their quality of life has improved.

State and local service delivery systems will:

- be less fragmented, have improved communication across systems, and be more efficient by decreasing duplication of services;
- systematically decrease barriers to employment of adults with disabilities at state and local levels (e.g. lack of: transportation, health care/insurance, education, workforce training, housing, assistive technology, civil rights, on-site and off-site job accommodations and long-term follow-along supports);
- be more user friendly and customer oriented;
- be more cost-effective than services provided in less integrated delivery service systems;
- increase the use of Medicaid waivers and individual waivers of SSA eligibility and income requirements; and
- realize substantial cost savings in terms of reducing the costs of public benefit programs.

Evaluation

Up to 5 percent of the grant amount would be reserved for rigorous evaluation. Each successful applicant would be required to demonstrate an ability and willingness to cooperate in a meaningful fashion in an overall evaluation of their coordination and integration efforts.

Attachment: Proposed Legislative Language for Allowable Activities**SEC. ____ . AUTHORIZED BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES.--**

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(a) **Systems Change Grants.--** Funds made available from appropriations for carrying out this Act may be used to provide assistance pursuant to grants or contracts with eligible entities in each State for--

(1) the establishment of partnerships utilizing existing local, State, and Federal resources for the purpose of achieving the coordinated provision of integrated income assistance, health and other benefits, job training and placement, and other employment-related services for adults with disabilities;

(2) the planning, development, and implementation of cooperative agreements among consortium members establishing such new partnerships;

(3) making arrangements to link such services with local one-stop delivery systems under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in a manner that comprehensively supports coordinated delivery of employment-related services to individuals with disabilities;

(4) the provision of training and technical assistance to consortium partners under this Act and to all components of the Statewide workforce investment system under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in order--

(A) to increase awareness of the availability of and the eligibility requirements for employment-related benefits, services, and training for adults with disabilities; and

(B) to promote equal opportunity for the effective participation of individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities in the State through improved understanding and knowledge of program accessibility needs and requirements;

(5) the development and implementation of procedures designed to enhance the provision of services for adults with disabilities through such means as common intake, resource information and assistance (including assistance in resume preparation and career development, and information on employment-related services, programs, and benefits), the development of customer databases and customer service hotlines, and appropriate employment-related counseling and referrals, utilizing single point-of-entry systems involving appropriate electronic and staff assistance;

(6) the development of information systems that link consortium partners with the Statewide workforce investment system and with national, State, and local labor market information resources, including employment statistics and information on job vacancies;

(7) the establishment of linkages with other providers of services that adults with disabilities may need in order to find and keep gainful employment, including such providers as local public agencies, not-for-profit service providers, community-based organizations, and educational institutions;

(8) the establishment of arrangements for the provision of comprehensive pre-service assistance for individuals with disabilities, including counseling on benefits and incentives under the Social Security Act, and information on the array of available services, including transportation assistance and subsidies; and

(9) evaluation of programs or activities funded under this Act.

(b) IMPROVED SERVICES TO BETTER SERVE TARGETED POPULATIONS.

--
In order to better serve targeted sub-populations among adults with disabilities, funds made available from appropriations for carrying out this Act may be used to provide assistance pursuant to grants or contracts--

(1) to enable a State's publicly-funded entities serving specific sub-populations of adults with disabilities (including individuals who are blind or deaf, or have psychiatric or developmental disabilities, and others) to provide training and technical assistance to consortium partners, relating to the specific needs and barriers faced by their clients;

(2) to identify and implement systems changes that address unique barriers to employment for targeted sub-populations, including--

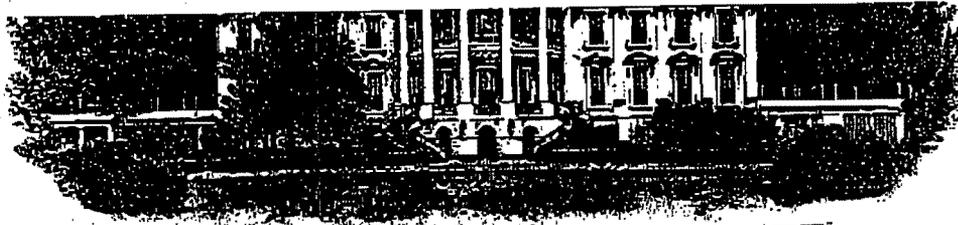
(A) linkages and improved access to transportation for those with mobility impairments;

(B) resolution of housing issues facing those experiencing de-institutionalization or loss of public housing support; and

(C) other barriers to entry into employment and job retention; and

(3) to identify and implement service delivery approaches for targeted sub-populations that bridge or cut across the relevant State systems, in order to address specific barriers confronting such sub-populations.

(c) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.-- Not to exceed 20 percent of the amounts available for grants or contracts under this section may be used for the acquisition of computer hardware and software to facilitate linking or consolidating information or services provided by existing State, local, and Federal providers.



THE WHITE HOUSE

**CECILIA ROUSE
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO PRESIDENT
NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL
(202) 456-5359 (Tel.)
(202) 456-2223 (Fax)**

TO: See Distribution List

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COMMENTS: _____

Here are background papers for The BRIDGE Program meeting taking place on Tuesday, October 13th at 2:00 pm in room 239 OEOB. Thank you.

Call Sonyia at 456-5351 if fax is incomplete.

10/14

Susan D: ~~is~~ problem not just coordination but fact that people need additional services

Set H.
options

① make selection criteria

② through evaluation

Susan D. Got 27 applications / required ~~prop~~ states to assume people who had health care

* we need to make sure that through

Set H. Selection criteria → more points for applicants that ensure health care when people go to work

**

Rehab Act would allow this coordination (already have statutory auth)

→ An allowable activity should be policy development work

→ that should be the real contribution of some agencies

→ or could be the contribution that Consortium agency contributes

→ ? propose how you plan to develop plans to fill the gaps **

**

→ how much do we want to lead states there

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② Education = too much One Stop
(Critic)