

Sponsor Testimony on H.B. 586
House State & Local Government Committee
Representative Brigid Kelly & Representative David Greenspan

May 5, 2020

Chairman Wiggam, Vice-Chair Stephens and members of the House State & Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 586.

Ohio's Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) was created in 1976 recognizing that individuals with disabilities have the highest unemployment rate of any minority group in the country. The program was created to mitigate the cost of social benefits being paid to unemployed individuals with disabilities. The Ohio Department of Administrative Services cites a Fiscal Year 2013 cost benefit analysis showing a \$2,182 savings for each worker with a disability that is [employed](#) due to an increase in income tax payments and reduced government entitlements.

CRP is a purchasing program established in the Ohio Revised Code and overseen by the Department of Administrative Services. Under the program, nonprofit organizations that employ Ohioans with work-limiting disabilities apply to be certified suppliers for goods and services. In Fiscal Year 2019, the CRP program supported the employment of 2,021 people with disabilities and saved state government \$4,409,822.

For any procurement need, prior to the start of a competitive selection process, Ohio's state agencies, political subdivisions and any entity that receives general fund support, is obligated to review and buy from the procurement list of products and services available from certified CRP suppliers. There are currently 78 CRP suppliers in Ohio, providing everything from janitorial services to lawn care services to products such as hand soap and office supplies. They provide quality, on time, products and services at a fair market price.

In speaking with suppliers in our districts, we have heard concerns that at times state agencies and political subdivisions have not followed the CRP purchasing requirements. This may be due to a lack of awareness for the program or participants, or in what seems to be a growing trend, an agency may bundle a non-CRP good or service with a qualifying CRP good or service as a means to avoid going through the program.

This legislation is intended to reinforce the intent of the program and prohibit "bundling" when a CRP product or service is a portion of a larger RFP. The goal is to clarify and tighten the requirements for the program to ensure that agencies are following the statute.

CRP is a jobs program that empowers individuals with disabilities to find employment, become taxpayers and save the state money. We ask for your support of this legislation to strengthen the program, which will provide additional jobs and training opportunities for people with disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to this bill. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.