



Senate Bill 312

AN ACT CONCERNING A JANITORIAL WORK PROGRAM FOR PERSONS
WITH A DISABILITY AND PERSONS WITH A DISADVANTAGE

Testimony of the Department of Administrative Services

March 5, 2024

Good morning, Senator Lesser, Representative Gilchrest, Ranking Members Senator Seminara, Representative Case, and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee. My name is Michelle Gilman, Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services. I am joined by our DAS Assistant Director of Procurement Programs and Services, Antoinette Webster. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 312.

This bill amends CGS §4a-82 to clarify the criteria required for certified small or minority businesses to participate in the janitorial work program. The janitorial work program was established in 2006 to create and expand work opportunities, specifically full-time jobs, or full-time equivalents at standard wage rates, for people with a disability and people with a disadvantage.

Under this program, contractors agree:

1. to fill at least one-third of the jobs of a specific contract with people with physical or cognitive disabilities, and an additional one-third of the jobs under a specific contract with people with a disadvantage, defined as people deemed eligible for employment services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) or whose income during the previous calendar year was not greater than two hundred per cent of the federal poverty level for a family of four; and
2. to pay those employees a standard wage.

To be eligible to participate in this program, contractors must either employ more than 200 people providing janitorial services in Connecticut or be a certified Connecticut small business. **The intent of this legislative proposal is to clarify that the above-listed requirements apply to all businesses that participate in this program, regardless of their size.**

This statute requires clarification because under current law, subsection (l) of CGS §4a-82 appears to notwithstanding all the provisions of subsection (e), including the requirements listed above, for certified Connecticut small businesses participating in the program. In other words, the current language appears to inadvertently waive the contractor requirements put in place to protect the interests of impacted workers, when those workers are employed by a certified small business. This technical adjustment clarifies that these protective requirements are applicable to all companies participating in the janitorial work program.

The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) worked collaboratively with the Department of Developmental Services, Department of Aging and Disability Services, and the Connecticut Community Nonprofit Alliance on this important proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and share our support with the Committee.