

FEB 11 2004
HUMAN RESOURCES

HOUSE FILE 2228
BY CARROLL and RAECKER

Passed House, Date _____ Passed Senate, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act to establish a newsline for the blind program within the
2 department for the blind and to establish telephone utility
3 assessments.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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HF-2228

1 Section 1. Section 216B.3, Code Supplement 2003, is
2 amended by adding the following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 18. Plan, establish, administer, and
4 promote a statewide newsline for the blind program to provide
5 audio news and information services to blind or visually
6 impaired persons residing in this state.

7 a. The commission may enter into necessary contracts and
8 arrangements with the national federation for the blind to
9 provide for the delivery of newspapers over the telephone,
10 furnished by the national federation for the blind.

11 b. The commission shall annually submit a budget for the
12 program to the Iowa utilities board, which may approve or
13 disapprove the budget in part or in whole.

14 Sec. 2. Section 216B.4, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2003,
15 is amended to read as follows:

16 The director may accept financial aid from the government
17 of the United States for carrying out rehabilitation and
18 physical restoration of the blind and for providing library,
19 news, and information services to persons who are blind and
20 persons with physical disabilities.

21 Sec. 3. Section 477C.6, Code 2003, is amended to read as
22 follows:

23 477C.6 BUDGET.

24 The board shall review and approve the proposed annual
25 budget of the relay service program authorized in section
26 477C.3, and the equipment distribution program authorized in
27 section 477C.4, and the newsline for the blind program
28 authorized in section 216B.3, subsection 18.

29 Sec. 4. Section 477C.7, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2003,
30 is amended to read as follows:

31 The board shall impose an annual assessment to fund the
32 programs established in this chapter and in section 216B.3,
33 subsection 18, upon all telephone utilities providing service
34 in the state as follows:

35 Sec. 5. Section 477C.7, subsection 3, Code 2003, is

1 amended to read as follows:

2 3. The telephone utilities shall remit the assessed
3 amounts quarterly to a special fund, as defined under section
4 8.2, subsection 9. The moneys in the fund are appropriated
5 solely to plan, establish, administer, and promote the relay
6 service and equipment distribution programs and the newsline
7 for the blind program.

8 EXPLANATION

9 This bill establishes a program within the department for
10 the blind to provide news and information services by
11 telephone access to blind and visually impaired persons who
12 reside in this state.

13 The bill grants administrative authority over the program
14 to the commission for the blind. The commission may enter
15 into an agreement to access the existing newsline services of
16 the national federation for the blind. The commission must
17 submit an annual budget for the program for review and
18 approval by the Iowa utilities board. The program shall be
19 funded in the form of annual assessments upon all telephone
20 utilities providing service in Iowa in the same manner as
21 currently assessed to support dual-party relay services for
22 the deaf.

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