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Subject: Secretary Carson: "Unlocking America's Full Potential"

State Leaders,

Below you find HUD Secretary Carson's Op-Ed "Unlocking America's Full Potential."

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT SECRETARY BEN CARSON: "UNLOCKING AMERICA'S FULL POTENTIAL"
"To unlock America's full potential, we need a welfare system of opportunity for the 21st century. The executive order signed by President Trump on Tuesday is a big step in the right direction."

Unlocking America's full potential
By Secretary Ben Carson
The Washington Times
April 22, 2018

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While America is now experiencing record low unemployment, our country still struggles from nearly record-high welfare enrollment.

Too many Americans remain on the sidelines of our economy. Today, a record 28 million able-bodied adults receive Medicaid, a 400 percent increase since 2000. More than 43 percent of all households receiving federal housing assistance are headed by an able-bodied adult. And in 2016, more than 16 million able-bodied adults received food stamps.

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Too many of our neighbors are caught in a welfare system that perpetuates a cycle of poverty and breaks the American spirit of work, free enterprise and family. I often wonder what some of my childhood friends could have achieved if our welfare system promoted these fundamental keys to escaping poverty. What new inventions, policy ideas, medical advances, and discoveries never happen because too many languish in poverty?

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To unlock America's full potential, we need a welfare system of opportunity for the 21st century. The executive order signed by President Trump on Tuesday is a big step in the right direction.

Our welfare system should be a pathway to self-sufficiency by focusing on work and stable families, giving hope to their dreams and a foundation for their success. We need a dynamic and innovative welfare system for today's dynamic economy.

Furthermore, we need a welfare system that is data-driven and measures outcomes, not just participation. If we cannot measure the true impact of our programs on their participants, we will only perpetuate the cycle of poverty.

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[Read the full op-ed here.](#)

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Nic

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