

From: Soura, Christian
To: Lillian.B.Koller@dss.sc.gov <Lillian.B.Koller@dss.sc.gov>
Date: 7/13/2012 9:15:41 AM
Subject: FW: TANF prgoram change- FEEDBACK NEEDED THIS AM

FYI.

CLS

Christian L. Soura
Deputy Chief of Staff

(803) 543-0792
ChristianSoura@gov.sc.gov

From: Haltiwanger, Katherine
Sent: Friday, July 13, 2012 8:33 AM
To: Soura, Christian; Baker, Josh
Subject: Fw: TANF prgoram change- FEEDBACK NEEDED THIS AM
Importance: High

From: Marie Sanderson [<mailto:msanderson@rgppc.org>]
Sent: Friday, July 13, 2012 08:35 AM
To: Marie Sanderson <msanderson@rgppc.org>
Cc: Lindsay Russell <lrussell@rgppc.org>; Dustin Huffman <dhuffman@rgppc.org>
Subject: TANF prgoram change- FEEDBACK NEEDED THIS AM

Good morning Action Officers, Education/Workforce Advisors and Healthcare Advisors:

Yesterday, the Obama Administration announced waivers for the TANF program which would in short, eliminate the need for recipients to have to work for their benefits. As most of you know, work requirements have been a cornerstone of the TANF program, which are relatively flexible funds for states.

We've been contacted by a number of groups asking our opinion this AM. Please forward this to your TANF office or policy staffer ASAP.

QUESTION: Did any of our states request this? Is there are reason to remove the work requirements? Please respond directly to me at MSanderson@rgppc.org.

Thanks in advance for your help.

More information:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/policy/im-ofa/2012/im201203/im201203.html>

<http://blog.heritage.org/2012/07/12/obama-guts-welfare-reform/>

Press Release

Camp, Hatch Blast HHS Move to Undermine Work Requirements for Welfare Recipients and Question HHS' Legal Authority

Washington, DC - Today, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued "guidance" to States about the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program that could undermine the critical work focus of welfare reform. The HHS guidance attempts to explain how States can now seek "waivers" of work requirements for welfare recipients for the first time since the TANF program was created in the 1996 welfare reform law. This HHS guidance is not in response to any change in TANF law. Nor does it follow up on any proposal from the Obama Administration that seeks to make policy changes to TANF through the regular legislative process. The TANF program was extended under the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 through FY 2010. The Obama Administration has not proposed a reauthorization of the TANF program and the program has been extended on a stop-gap basis for several years. **Instead, the guidance issued by the Obama Administration simply declares – despite specific statutory provisions to the contrary – that States may waive work requirements at the heart of the Nation's successful welfare reform program.**

In response, Dave Camp (R-MI), Chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, and Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Ranking Republican on Senate Finance Committee, sent a letter to HHS Secretary Sebelius seeking her explanation of the statutory authority behind the Administration's guidance. The TANF program is currently authorized through September 2012, requiring reauthorization by then for Federal TANF block grant payments to States – which States in turn use to support benefits for low-income families – to continue.

In contrast to the HHS guidance, the law clearly indicates that States cannot waive TANF work requirements. Nonpartisan experts also support this view. For example, the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service reviewed this issue in 2001 and concluded that "Effectively, there are no 'TANF waivers.'"

In expressing concern about the Administration's guidance, **Chairman Camp**, one of the authors of the successful 1996 welfare reform law, said: "Welfare reform provided States a simple deal: fixed Federal funding and enormous flexibility in exchange for a requirement that they engage welfare recipients in work and related activities. In response, States helped record numbers of low-income parents go to work, earnings soared, and dependence on welfare and poverty plunged by record levels. **Now 16 years later, the Obama Administration is proposing to let States effectively eliminate a key feature of that reform – the TANF work requirement.** This is a brazen and unwarranted unraveling of welfare reform. This ends welfare reform as we know it."

Ranking Member Hatch said: "I'm disappointed that after years of sitting on their hands and failing to propose any significant improvements to the TANF programs, the Obama Administration is once again over-stepping their authority and attempting to circumvent Congress through an unprecedented bypass of the legislative process," said Hatch. "The TANF programs have languished for years without a robust review and, as a result, many states lack a meaningful pathway to engage work ready adults in activities that promote self-sufficiency. This 'power grab' by the Obama Administration is not a constructive effort to encourage states to think creatively about how to get more people off of welfare and into productive jobs and will, in fact, delay a comprehensive review and analysis of TANF."

The full letter can be read [here](#).

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Marie Thomas Sanderson

Policy Director

Republican Governors Association (RGA)

MSanderson@rga.org

Republican Governors Public Policy Committee (RGPPC)

MSanderson@rgppc.org

Office (202) 464- 8556

Cell (601) 946-4529