

John O. Norquist  
Mayor

Milwaukee  
150  
1846 1996

New  
Hope Project

June 11, 1997

Rahm Emanuel  
Senior Advisor to the President  
Office of the President  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Emanuel:

Thank you for your response. I appreciate your enthusiasm in wanting to hear more about Milwaukee-based programs that can be used as models for a national agenda. Enclosed please find the following models I see as being capable of effectively serving our nation's needs.

As it relates to your request on drafting the "Whats Working Guide," enclosed you will also find some supplements from the U.S. Conference of Mayors Best Practices of City Governments web site. I would strongly suggest you have someone from your office take a sincere look at some of the innovative programs from around the country to help you formulate a guide possibly entitled "Beacons of Hope" from the administration.

MODEL I

Project F.O.C.U.S. grew out of the desire for a prevention program that would have an immediate impact on fire deaths in Milwaukee. The success of this program was due to the joint cooperation of the Mayor, City of Milwaukee Fire Department and private corporate funding. The unique concept of Project F.O.C.U.S. is that it uses fire department vehicles manned by on-duty fire fighters for the purpose of fire prevention and education. Between 1991 and 1995, there were over 7,800 smoke detectors installed in the homes of citizens, and the annual fire death average in the city has gone down 55%. Moreover, the annual fire death average among children has gone down 64%. The results of Project F.O.C.U.S. have been encouraging and the Mayor is extremely proud of its success.

Office of the Mayor  
City Hall  
200 East Wells Street  
Milwaukee,  
Wisconsin  
53202  
(414) 286-2200



Project F.O.C.U.S. is a prime example of a program that can be tailored to the need in reducing the nation's deaths. By requiring Project F.O.C.U.S. to be implemented in community block grant areas where fatal fires most often occur, it is my judgment that deaths caused by fires would decrease dramatically across the nation, especially our children.

#### MODEL II

The New Hope Project is another program which the Mayor and members of his administration have successfully fostered and implemented. It combines a variety of private, federal, state and local funding sources to connect low income adults to private sector jobs. The program has four key components: 1) Help participants find private sector jobs and community service jobs; 2) A wage supplement; 3) Health care insurance; and 4) Child care. New hope is designed to be flexible and adaptive to the individual circumstances of those in need of assistance.

The Project's ultimate goal is to allow state and national policy-makers to focus attention on alleviating the harsh circumstances of poverty through programs which are humane, cost-effective and self-motivating. It is a fundamental belief of the New Hope Project that all American citizens should have access to employment opportunity which awards a sense of self-worth and provides a sustainable level of economic certainty.

If the New Hope Project were to be expanded to a national demonstration project, I would suggest the following:

Amend TANF to create a "Work-Only" local exemption. Under the "Work-Only" local exemption, TANF block grant funds and corresponding state matching dollars could be used in any urban county [at the request of the Mayor or in up to 50 urban counties] to operate a program under which all the regular rules and restrictions of TANF would be waived if the state operated a program that provided the following:

1. All low-income adults [as defined by the state, but not to exceed 200% of poverty] were included in the program;

2. All low-income adults, with the exception of the disabled, elderly and women who recently gave birth [within the last 12 weeks to 6 months, as determined by the state] are offered help that is conditioned on their performing full-time [i.e., at least 30 hours per week of work];
3. Unemployed individuals are offered assistance in finding private sector jobs then are offered minimum wage, time-limited community reasonable time. (Participants can do part-time community serviced jobs, but their total work effort are from any combination of CSJ's and private sector work. The work hours must equal at least 30 hours per week or more);
4. All participants who are working, whether in community service jobs or private sector jobs, are offered an earnings supplement package that assures them, if they work at least 30 hours, their wages plus federal EITC and any applicable state EITC plus an additional earnings supplement, (earnings supplement package would also have to be structured to assure income after taxes and benefit phase-outs are taken into account);
5. All participants who are seeking work or working are offered affordable, sliding-scale health care, purchased from HMOs on a competitive basis.

Project New Hope is innovative and working. By encouraging other cities to exercise the New Hope model, the administration could continue its pledge to have "Changed Welfare as We Knew it."

#### MODEL III

In 1995 Mayor Norquist organized the Mayor's Youth Job Fair. Since its inception, over 3,000 youths have participated and obtained essential employment. The concept is to assemble as many Milwaukee area employers and youths into one central location and offer each party the chance to acquaint another on their attributes. The theory is not to subsidize summer employment but for government to act as an facilitator.

It would be my recommendation that the U.S. Department of Labor work with local municipalities in creating an annual U.S. Department of Labor Job Fair. The Department of Labor could also solicit support from other federal agencies such as the Departments of Transportation, Commerce, Agriculture and Forestry to work with private corporations to participate in the Presidential Job Fair offering summer and entry level opportunities to area youths. The Job Fair could take place at any Federal Office Complex with the President or Secretary of Labor launching the event.

Again, the concept would not be to subsidize the private sector but to give them a chance to fill and expand employment opportunities. The Department of Labor was created to assist Americans with the opportunity to work and excel in the United States labor force, it is my suggestion that you explore this concept.

In conclusion, thanks for the opportunity to share with you some of the innovative accomplishments of the City of Milwaukee. Further, I encourage you to take another look at the list of accomplishments on "Whats Working" in Milwaukee and use that list when you are thinking of ways to rebuild urban areas.

Sincerely,



Orson C. Porter  
Deputy Director of  
Intergovernmental Affairs

Enclosures