



LOCAL GOVERNMENT COALITION ON WELFARE REFORM

- National League of Cities • National Association of Counties •
- United States Conference of Mayors •

WR - NACO

Recommendations for Welfare Reform Legislation

Current welfare reform proposals eliminate the needs-based nature of public assistance, replacing it with poorly fund block grants containing no assurances that local governments will be provided with adequate program funding. The loss of "safety net", along with cuts in benefit eligibility and denial of job training to recipients will force city and county governments to bear the unshared costs of caring for these families and dealing with the increase in homelessness medical expense, hunger and crime in communities. As representatives of cities and counties concerned with welfare reform, we support the following important concepts to be included in any welfare reform legislation.

- ♦ **Welfare reform legislation must not impose unfunded federal or state mandates on local governments.**
 - Ensure that states maintain at least their current funding level for welfare programs without increasing local government costs.
- ♦ **Ensure local government role if block grants are established.**

State and local governments must work jointly to plan and design programs so that welfare services are provided in a manner that meets the needs of the community.

 - Local governments currently responsible for the administration of the state programs must be allowed to design welfare programs for their jurisdictions.
- ♦ **Maintain benefits for legal immigrants.**
 - Excluding tax-paying legal residents from assistance is unfair and shifts responsibility and costs to already overburdened local governments through general assistance and city and county services.
 - Federal denial of state and local benefits may be unconstitutional.
- ♦ **Ensure programs remain needs-based.**
 - Maintain the individual entitlement to welfare and Medicaid benefits.
 - Include adequately funded "contingency" funding mechanism which states could access in times of economic downturn and/or population growth.
 - Remove provisions concerning family caps and assistance to unwed mothers under 18.
- ♦ **Guarantee child care and education and training.**
 - Individuals should not be required to participate in work activities unless affordable child care is provided.
 - Training or education should be an allowable work activity.
- ♦ **Make work participation rates realistic.**
 - Reduce work participation rates and requirements from levels in current proposals.
- ♦ **Maintain Title IV-E Foster Care entitlement status.**
 - Retain entitlement for Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, including IV-E administration/training funding.
 - Ensure Medicaid linkage for all children in foster care.
- ♦ **Maintain SSI eligibility and link to Medicaid for children.**
 - Retain Medicaid eligibility for all SSI recipients.
 - Preserve individual functional disability assessments (IFA) for SSI children.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
HUMAN SERVICES AND EDUCATION STEERING COMMITTEE
AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING RESOLUTION (6M) ON WELFARE
REFORM**

WHEREAS, counties are closer to the people and are the basic providers of social services and welfare programs; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties has been a long-time supporter of, **and continues to support** a comprehensive welfare reform system that rewards work, protects children and strengthens families, and that is supported by sufficient federal funding and assures local flexibility to train people for jobs that promote long-term self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS, Congress is currently debating welfare block grant proposals that will significantly change the federal, state, and county role; and

WHEREAS, many of these changes would hurt vulnerable children by **increasing unmet basic needs and further eroding the existing protections provided by the federal government** and ~~will shift by shifting~~ costs to the county government level; and

WHEREAS, counties and states will have to **immediately implement costly administrative** ~~make costly significant~~ changes in the way programs are ~~delivered~~ operated; and

WHEREAS, in order for welfare reform to succeed, ~~every effort must be made to ensure that employment is available to those making the transition to work~~ **transition to work must be facilitated by making jobs available and by assuring the provision of job training, job placement, child care, health care and transportation costs;**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties reaffirms its current policy that for the protection of children the Congress continue the federal entitlement for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Foster Care payments and administration, Adoption Assistance, Medicaid, and Food Stamps; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties opposes eliminating eligibility for single teenage parents and their children but supports alternatives that would encourage teenage parents to live with their parents or other responsible adults, and fund enhanced case management and independent living arrangement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties opposes family caps and **supports pilot programs but supports continuing demonstration programs** to test the effectiveness of family caps; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties reaffirms its opposition to denying or reducing benefits to legal immigrants; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties reaffirms ~~its current~~ policy that time-limited assistance must include adequate federal and state funding for the necessary job training, job placement, continued subsistence grants, health care coverage, child care, transportation, and administration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that time-limited assistance must also include adequate federal and state funding for homeless shelters, foster care, and services to the mentally ill and handicapped; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that welfare reform must include an aggressive strategy of collaboration among the federal, state, and county governments and the private sector to create enough living-wage jobs that promote sustainable self-sufficiency for all; and that if competitive jobs are not available, alternatives must be provided; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties opposes arbitrary and counterproductive participation requirements and ~~In their place, the National Association of Counties supports mutually negotiated outcome measures in which states are judged by their progress toward achieving these goals to evaluate programs and service delivery;~~ and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties supports ~~the federal, state, and county participation in county assistance programs with no reduction in the current federal participation;~~ requests that the federal and state governments provide enough funding to ensure existing levels of service without shifting costs to counties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties opposes reducing benefits to children who have not had paternity established; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties supports mandating parental cooperation with paternity establishment efforts for child support and providing county and state agencies with the tools to enforce that cooperation, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties urges Congress to provide counties and states ~~sufficient~~ **adequate** time to design and implement welfare reform to meet the needs of service recipients and the local employment market; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Association of Counties adopts the following "Guidelines for Income Maintenance and Child Welfare Block Grants" to both ensure specific protection and encourage flexibility; and

~~**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Counties shall have the opportunity to plan in conjunction with the state the design and delivery of block grant services so that such services may be provided in a manner that is appropriate for the local population. Counties that administer the block grant programs and services shall participate in the state's decisions for allocation of resources and funds.~~

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that welfare reform legislation must include a requirement that the state provide certification of local government involvement in the development of the state plan. This certification must include the following components:

1. That local governments have worked jointly with the state in all phases of the plan, design, and administration of welfare services in the state so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations;
2. That local governments have had at least 60 days to submit comments on the final plan and the design of such services; and

Such certification shall also include assurance that when local elected officials are currently responsible for the administration of welfare services, such local elected officials will be able to plan, design, and administer for their jurisdictions the operation of these programs.

Adopted by Human Services and Education Steering Committee
(unanimous)
March 2, 1996

Adopted by Board of Directors
(unanimous)
March 3, 1996



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RECOMMENDED AMENDMENT ON ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Recommended amendment. Amend section 402 (a) (4) of the conference report on H.R. 4 to read:

"(4) CERTIFICATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM

-A certification by the chief executive officer of the State specifying which State agency or agencies will administer and supervise the program referred to in paragraph (1) for the fiscal year, which shall include assurances that local governments and private sector organizations---

"(A) have worked jointly with the State in all phases of the plan and design of welfare services in the State so that services are provided in a manner appropriate to local populations; and

"(B) have had at least 60 days to submit comments on the final plan and the design of such services; and

"(C) will not be required to establish or increase welfare related programs, activities or services in ways that necessitate the expenditure of additional public revenue by a unit of local government unless the State or Federal government appropriates the additional funds to the unit of local government that fully funds the additional expenditure necessary to carry out the requirement for each year the requirement is in effect.

Such certification shall also include assurance that when local officials are currently responsible for the administration of welfare services, such local elected officials will be able to plan, design and administration for their jurisdictions the programs established pursuant to this Act.



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Executive Director:

J. DONALD COLLIER

March 14, 1996

TO: Anita Ford
FROM: Laura DeKoven Waxman *LDW*
RE: City and County Officials Attending March 15 Meeting

Attending the March 15 Meeting at 2:00 PM in the Secretary's Conference Room will be:

- Laura DeKoven Waxman, The U.S. Conference of Mayors
- Marilena Sanz, National Association of Counties
- Barrie Tabin, National League of Cities
- Eve Maldonado, League of California Cities
- Tom Howarth, Philadelphia
- Lisa Shuger, New York City
- Tom Walters, San Diego County
- Jay Michaud, Chicago
- Kate Sachnoff, Chicago
- Patricia Craig, California Welfare Directors
- Darryl Stephens, California Welfare Directors
- Merrill Wegner, Alameda County

Franklin Logan, LA City
(tentative) Stacy Palmer, Newark + San Francisco etc
Marilyn Bering Thompson, Newark + San Francisco, CA