

# City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia  
Office of the Chief Clerk  
Room 402, City Hall  
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 030193)

## RESOLUTION

Finding that the Bush Administration Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program reauthorization proposal as passed by the U.S. House of Representatives will both undo those successes that welfare reform has had, and fail to address the worsened problems of poverty and barriers to employment that those currently on TANF continue to face, and urging Congress, and in particular Pennsylvania's two United State Senators, Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum, to reject the Administration proposal, and to support alternatives that will realistically and fairly help families balance work and family to achieve self-sufficiency.

WHEREAS, Congress has before it H.B. 4, the Administration's legislation to reauthorize for another five years the major welfare changes enacted in 1996 for the renamed Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program; and

WHEREAS, Although so-called welfare reform has resulted in over 50% of Pennsylvania TANF families leaving TANF, the program has not had a commensurate impact of moving families out of poverty and with sufficient incomes to provide self-sufficiency for parents and children; and

WHEREAS, TANF parents who do obtain jobs receive an average wage of about \$7 when an hourly wage of about \$18 an hour has been deemed necessary according to the Self-Sufficiency Standard researched by the Women's Association for Women's Alternatives, Inc. Working TANF parents see their TANF cash assistance end when their earnings are but 64% of the poverty level; and

WHEREAS, Although Pennsylvania has provided many new and expanded work supports, such as child care for its TANF families, due to a "Work First" policy thrust, it has ranked 37 among the States in "success in the workforce" according to the federal government; and

WHEREAS, Although the total welfare population in Pennsylvania has declined, the percentage of the state's remaining welfare population has climbed in the city of Philadelphia to over 50% of the state share. Philadelphia's caseload is distinguished for

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having a significant number of parents with substantial barriers to employment: many do not speak English; a large number have physical or mental disabilities and other barriers to work and all live in a City with declining employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, The Bush Administration's TANF reauthorization proposal, by further raising the work requirement to 40 hours a week and requiring that 70% of those on TANF be in narrowly defined "work" activities, fails to recognize that those remaining on TANF have serious barriers to employment that require state flexibility to achieve self-sufficiency; and

WHEREAS, In order to succeed TANF families need skills development, basic education and literacy in English, rehabilitative services and vocational training and, for some, college classes, but they will not receive them under the Administration proposal since these would not constitute "work activities" and would be precluded by make-work projects that meet the 40 hour and 70% work participation requirements; and

WHEREAS, The state of Pennsylvania under the prior Republican Ridge/Schweicker Administration was very critical of the Bush Administration TANF reauthorization proposals, commenting that they would preclude successful welfare-to-work initiatives and would cost the state an additional \$367 million, money it does not have; and

WHEREAS, The Bush Administration proposal further fails to fulfill welfare reform by not making its primary goal the bringing of TANF families out of poverty; by not increasing child care resources to meet the child care needs of poor working families; by mandating full-family (parents and children) welfare sanctions and not instituting pre-sanction review protections such as were piloted successfully at the Congreso de Latinos in Philadelphia; by not restoring TANF and Medicaid benefits to legal immigrants; and by not repealing the felony drug ban that continues to penalize mothers who have been rehabilitated and need help to move on with their lives; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That this Council finds that the Bush Administration TANF reauthorization proposal as passed by the U.S. House of Representatives will both undo those successes that welfare reform has had, and fail to address the worsened problems of poverty and barriers to employment that those currently on TANF continue to face. This Council urges Congress, and in particular Pennsylvania's two United State Senators, Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum, to reject the Administration proposal, and to support alternatives that will realistically and fairly help families balance work and family to achieve self-sufficiency.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the twenty-seventh of March, 2003.

Anna C. Verna  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Ortiz

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Reynolds Brown, Tasco, Kenney, DiCicco, Nutter, Goode, Cohen and Blackwell

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