

Potential Legislation Ideas for the EOPR Task Force**Access to & Coordination of Public Benefits & Non-Profit/Faith-Based Assistance Sub-Committee****Senator Betty Boyd & Representative Ken Summers****Summary:****1) Identification Issues:**

- Expand fee waivers for DMV to include Department of Corrections and County Jails.
- Expand fee waivers for birth certificates to allow Human Services clients to receive a birth certificate for free if referred by the county department -- similar to the ID provision.
- Recommend changes to the HB06S-1023 legislation that requires documentation of lawful presence for those who are applying for public benefits. Require coordination between programs within Human Services to accept an attestation of original birth certificate (no longer requiring multiple original documents for each program, each county, or at every redetermination for benefits) and implement a mandate for those agencies impacted to show effectiveness of the legislation.
- Require that Vital Statistics provide a monthly report to the Department of Human Services that details that has died within the state.
- Require that all DMV locations adhere to federal and state ADA requirements.
- Require authorities and agencies to return the original drivers license or picture ID (if determined the ID is valid) to the owner. (I.e. leaving criminal justice system, county jails, child welfare system, etc.).

2) Strategic Use Funds:

- Authorize a portion of the annual SSUF appropriation to be used for evaluation of the overall usage and program effectiveness of the SSUF funds, specifically with low income families and communities.

3) SNAP/Food Stamp Issues:

- Require the implementation of a State Outreach Plan
- Lengthen certification periods so that the standard certification period for households shall be the maximum length allowable by federal law.

4) State Wide Economic Development & Poverty Reduction Vision Mandate

- Department sponsored legislation and policy modifications must be able to address how it will impact poverty reduction and economic development issues.

5) Medicaid Matching Issued

- **Require that Federal Medicaid match be pursued related to mil levy contribution by county taxpayers to Developmental Disability programs.(Based upon information given this will simply require legislative enforcement and direction of DHS, DDD, Counties and the CCB's).**

Attached please find some potential legislation for the Task Force to consider tomorrow.

First is a recommendation that other entities be allowed to refer clients to DMV for an ID without a fee being charged. Specifically, this exemption would be for those referred by DOC or the county jails.

Second there are a few changes recommended to the HB06S-1023 legislation that requires documentation of lawful presence for those who are applying for public benefits. The need for some coordination and a mandate for those agencies impacted to show effectiveness are specifically recommended.

Next, a requirement that Vital Statistics provide a report to Human Services that details who has died within the state. We didn't get a chance to really cover this in the Sub-Committee meeting last week, but this is a huge problem for Human Services. It generally takes several months for the Department to find out that a client has died. In the meantime, we are paying benefits for that client. Many times the Department can't collect that money after the death is discovered by our office. This would make it much easier to ensure we aren't paying benefits for someone who is no longer entitled to them.

Finally is language that would allow Human Services clients to receive a birth certificate for free if referred by the county department – similar to the ID provision.

Thank you!

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Title 42 – Vehicles and Traffic
Article 2 – Drivers' Licenses
Part 3 – Identification Cards

42-2-306. Fees – disposition – repeal.

(II) Except as provided in subparagraph (III) of this paragraph (a), a fee of nine dollars and ninety cents at the time of application for an identification card or renewal of an identification card; except that, for applicants sixty years of age or older and applicants referred by any county department of social services pursuant to section 26-2-106(3) or 25.5-4-205 (3), C.R.S., or applicants referred by the state department of corrections, division of adult parole or a county jail there shall be no fee.

Title 24 – Government – State
Article 76.5 – Restrictions on Public Benefits

24-76.5-103. Verification of lawful presence – exceptions – reporting – rules.

(5.5) The governor shall designate a state agency or employee to serve as the State Lawful Presence and Identity Document Coordinator to ensure uniform compliance with this section.

(12) The directors of the state department of human services, state department of health care policy and financing, and state department of revenue shall report to the general assembly health and human services committees in May 2011 as to the effectiveness of this section.

Title 25 – Health
Article 2 – Vital Statistics

25-2-110. Certificates of death.

(10) The state registrar shall provide a monthly report to the state department of human services and the state department of health care policy and financing of all certificates of death completed.

25-2-117. Certified copies furnished – fee.

(2) An applicant shall pay fees established pursuant to section 25-2-121 for each of the following services:

- (a) The reproduction and certification of birth or death records; however, an applicant shall pay no fee for the provision of a certified copy of such a record to another state agency or to a county department of social/human services and shall pay no fee if the applicant is a delegate child support enforcement unit acting pursuant to article 13 of title 26, C.R.S.;

Senator Betty Boyd

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To: "Betty Boyd" <betty.boyd.senate@state.co.us>
Cc: "JuliaC Martinez" <JuliaC.Martinez@state.co.us>; "Karen Beye" <Karen.Beye@state.co.us>;
 "Samantha OneillDunbar" <Samantha.OneillDunbar@state.co.us>; "Bill Hanna"
 <Bill.Hanna@state.co.us>
Sent: Saturday, September 19, 2009 10:48 AM
Subject: Proposed Poverty Task Force Bill for SSUF Evaluation

Dear Senator Boyd,

Thank you for agreeing to propose that the Economic Opportunity and Poverty Reduction Task Force consider a bill for a statutory change to the Statewide Strategic Use Fund (SSUF - created via SB08-177) to authorize a portion of the annual SSUF appropriation to be used for evaluation. Current statutory language specifies that the SSUF appropriation is to be allocated to support initiatives that meet a purpose of TANF and a small administrative set-aside for the costs of the Strategic Allocation Committee: "The Department may annually use up to \$10,000 of the moneys annually appropriated from the Statewide Strategic Use Fund to offset the costs incurred by the Strategic Allocation Committee." However, this administrative set-aside is the only portion of the appropriation that may be used for purposes other than making project awards to eligible entities. Now that we have made the first two sets of SSUF grant awards – and know just how broad and strategic those initiatives/services are – it is clear that it would be of significant benefit to evaluate the impact of the SSUF grants, and that such an evaluation is beyond what the Department can accomplish with existing resources. Since the authorization would be from existing federal funds, the bill would not drive an additional fiscal impact.

We suggest that the statutory change allow the Department to use approximately 2% of the annual appropriation (\$200,000) to contract with a proven social program evaluator to do a rigorous, scientific-based evaluation to get a clear indication of the impact of these dollars on low-income Colorado families, as well as Colorado communities. Following the discussion at the August 18 Task Force meeting, we consulted with the administrator of the Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program (TGYS) at the Dept. of Public Health & Environment. That program is a similar broad-reaching, statewide program. Its statute allows the program to set aside \$200-250,000 for program evaluation. As the SSUF and TGYS programs have similar broad-reaching scopes, we believe that a comparable annual set-aside would enable the Department to pay for a rigorous evaluation of the SSUF program impact. As you know, the SSUF is a significant investment of public funds to support struggling Colorado families – a solid evaluation is the best way to display the impact of these dollars.

If this initiative is approved as one of the bills for the Task Force, we look forward to working with you and legislative staff to pull together the specific language in a draft bill. Samantha O'Neill-Dunbar on the Colorado Works staff has the lead responsibility for the SSUF program, and legislative staff could contact either Samantha or me for assistance in getting a draft bill prepared. Samantha can be reached at 303-866-2864, or Samantha.oneilldunbar@state.co.us. The best way to reach me is via my state e-mail address, bill.hanna@state.co.us, or my cell phone at 303-551-2858.

Thank you for your commitment to improving the lives of Colorado's most vulnerable families.

Sincerely,

Bill Hanna

9/21/2009

Concerning the Administration of the Food Assistance Program

This bill proposes changes to increase participation in the Colorado Food Assistance Program, one of the core goals of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force (p. 7 HB 09-1064). Colorado is ranked 48th in the nation for participation in the SNAP/Food Stamp Program, with only 54% of eligible people receiving benefits.¹ By adopting federal options that encourage participation in the food stamp program, the items proposed in this bill will promote access to the program.

1. Lengthen certification periods to ease county workloads by requiring CDHS to set food stamp certification periods at the maximum limit permitted under federal law.

Lengthening certification periods will help keep families connected with their periods for longer, with fewer bureaucratic requirements that necessitate time off work for working families. Longer certification periods will also reduce the burden on county offices, helping them connect families in need to food assistance as quickly and efficiently as possible in this time of rising need.

2. Allow organizations and agencies to access federal matching money to help fund outreach efforts for the Colorado Food Assistance Program. The Colorado Department of Human Services shall draft an SNAP/Food Stamps Outreach Plan and submit the plan to FNS for approval no later than August 15, 2010 and every year thereafter .

A formal outreach plan is a mechanism for the state to pass on federal money for food stamp outreach to organizations in Colorado who are working to connect the hungry and food insecure to SNAP/food stamps. A state outreach plan can build a vital partnership between state agencies and the other organizations and faith communities that are fighting poverty in Colorado.

Legal & Regulatory References

Code of Colorado Regulations Volume of Food Stamps (10 CCR 2506-1)

4.4240.1 Certification Period Guidelines

7 C.F.R. § 273.10(f) – 12 months is the longest certification period for most households

7 U.S.C. 2015(c) – Households subject to periodic reporting must report every six months at a minimum

Section 11(e) (1) (A) of The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 – State agencies can receive fifty percent reimbursement for allowable administrative costs, including program informational activities, but not including recruitment activities

7 C.F.R. 273.10(f) C.F.R § 272.2 (e) – States can access Federal money if it the state has an FNS approved outreach plan

7 CFR § 277.4 (e) – The state contribution towards SNAP state outreach grant matching funds can be provided by private organizations

¹ "Reaching Those in Need: Food Stamp Participation Rates in 2006", Food & Nutrition Service, USDA.
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/MENU/Published/SNAP/FILES/Participation/Reaching2006.pdf>

The State SNAP/Food Stamp Outreach Plan: What It Means, Why It Matters

What is a state outreach plan?

A state outreach plan is a formal document drafted by the state agency administering the program and submitted to the Food and Nutrition Service for approval. The plan describes the activities to be funded with the federal matching money.

- *The plan does not have to be statewide.* Outreach projects described in the plan can be anything from pilot projects in particular locations targeted to particular communities to large scale media efforts to raise awareness of SNAP/Food Stamps. (see guidance at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/outreach)
- *The state's part of the matching money can be put up by private organizations and funders.* In this way, the state plan can be a mechanism for passing through federal money to organizations engaging in outreach. The plan can be written so that there are no demands on the state's budget.

Some examples of low-cost outreach projects that could receive federal matching money through a state plan include:

- *Application assistance.* For example, food banks could hold enrollment clinics to help people using their services apply for SNAP/Food Stamps. In Arizona, they've found that application assistance, in combination with their online application, can be a critical point of access for food-insecure Arizonans.ⁱ
- *Trainings for organizations interested in helping their clients apply for benefits.* An advocacy organization like the Colorado Coalition to End Hunger can train community workers, students, volunteer organizations, church employees, and trusted figures in a community on how to help people apply for SNAP/Food Stamps.
- *Spreading the word.* Organizations can coordinate with schools to put information about the food assistance program in school newsletters, with employers to put information about the food assistance program in employee envelopes, and with utility companies to put information in utilities bills.

Twenty-eight states and the District of Columbia have outreach plans, including:

Connecticut	California	Pennsylvania
Maine	Hawaii	Illinois
Massachusetts	Nevada	Michigan
New Hampshire	Oregon	Minnesota
New York	Washington	Texas
Rhode Island	Florida	Arkansas
Vermont	Georgia	Oklahoma
Alaska	Tennessee	Iowa
Arizona	New Jersey	Montana

Why does outreach matter?

Outreach can help connect low-income people to the food assistance they need.

Many people struggling with poverty do not know that they may qualify for SNAP/Food Stamps; this is particularly true of working families, seniors, and immigrants. According to a USDA report, 69% of people who are eligible for SNAP/food stamps but do not participate in the program said they would participate if they knew they were eligible.ⁱⁱ Program outreach can also help overcome cultural and logistical barriers to accessing services.ⁱⁱⁱ

Increasing food stamp participation is good for the economy. Every \$5 in new food stamp benefits generates \$9.20 in total community spending.^{iv} In Pennsylvania, an 18 month outreach project in Philadelphia helped enroll 2,100 applicants and generated an estimated \$5.9 million a year in increased local economic activity.^v

Outreach can lighten the load for county administration. From FRAC's guide to outreach collaborations: "Trained outreach workers can screen potential clients for eligibility and help them gather the paperwork needed for their applications. The resulting cases presented to the local food stamp offices frequently will be easier for the caseworkers to process accurately and efficiently."

Outreach collaborations build valuable state-community partnerships. By capitalizing on the presence and work of non-profits, faith-based organizations, and community groups, outreach collaborations help make access to needed services more seamless.

ⁱ Personal communication between Nancy Rossano and Anne Bellows of the Food Research & Action Center.

ⁱⁱ "Food Stamp Program Access Study: Final Report," Susan Bartlett, Nancy Burstein, and William Hamilton, November 2004, www.ers.usda.gov/publications/efan0313/efan0313-3/efan0313-3fm.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ "Outreach Strategies for Medicaid & SCHIP: An Overview of Effective Strategies & Activities," Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, April 2006, <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/7495.pdf>

^{iv} Hanson, Kenneth, and Elise Golan (2002). *Effects of Changes in Food Stamp Expenditures Across the U.S. Economy*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Available at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/fanrr26/fanrr26-6/fanrr26-6.pdf>. Note: Economic effect of increasing food stamps measured for the whole U.S. economy. It may vary by location.

^v "Making Food Stamps Work: A Report on Greater Philadelphia Coalition against Hunger's Food Stamp Enrollment Campaign 2003-2006," Mary Summers, University of Pennsylvania, <http://www.upenn.edu/ccp/resources/publications/foodstampreport.pdf>

The Advantages of Longer SNAP/Food Stamp Certification Periods

Longer certification periods keep families from falling through the cracks.

- **Too many families are losing their benefits when it comes time to recertify, even though they may still be eligible.** A 2007 study of more than 9,500 SNAP/food stamp recipients in New York by the Urban Justice Center found that less than 20% of cases closed at recertification were identified as financially ineligible.¹
- **Losing SNAP/Food Stamp benefits needlessly can leave families unable to put food on the table.** Most do not leave at recertification because they are not hungry, in fact a study found two thirds of households who do not complete the recertification process experienced food insecurity and one quarter experienced hunger.²
- **Longer certification periods help families in need stay connected with the program longer.** The USDA found, in a study of South Carolina's adult-only households, that recipients left the program at much higher rates during recertification months, and that longer recertification periods translated into eligible household receiving food stamp longer.³

Longer certification periods will cut red tape and ease county workloads, enabling counties to process new applicants more quickly and handle larger caseloads.

Numerous states have already adopted twelve month certification periods.⁴

- Alabama, Arkansas, Hawaii, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Nebraska, and Wisconsin have twelve month certification periods for most households;
- Georgia, Kansas, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania have twelve month certification for most households and twenty four month certification for qualifying households of the elderly and disabled.

¹ "Keeping Food on the Table: Challenges to Food Stamp Retention in New York City

² "Food Stamp Access Study: Final Report," Abt Associates, Inc. for the Economic Research Service, US Department of Agriculture, November 2004

³ "South Carolina Food Stamp and Well-Being Study: Transitions in Food Stamp and TANF Participation and Employment Among Families with Children," South Carolina Department of Social Services for the Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, April 2006, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/CCR17/>.

⁴ "State Options Report," 8th ed, USDA, http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Memo/Support/State_Options/8-State_Options.pdf

Subject: Re: Food stamp certification periods
September 21, 2009

Good Morning Tracey -

We had been working on another Agency Letter that clarified appropriate certification periods for Food Assistance clients, however it appears that one remains in the clearance process.

The State recommends the following certification periods - either a three month certification period for ABAWD (Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents) households, the 24 month certification for Elderly/Disabled households, and a 6 month certification for all other households. While our regulations still include a 12 month option for a certification period, we are working on removing that in the future.

Please contact me if you have any additional questions.

Connie Bley

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State Wide Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Vision

To improve economic opportunity and reduce poverty within the state of Colorado, this legislation proposes that there be an overriding consideration of these concepts when proposing future legislation and policy modifications.

More specifically, department sponsored legislation must be able to address the following criteria:

- 1) legislation/policy effect on poverty reduction
- 2) legislation/policy effect on economic opportunity increase.

Premise of this bill is that state policy makers and program administrators will make a concerted, collaborative effort to reduce poverty in Colorado. State leaders will craft policies and programs that assist families in need of immediate help, provide short-term assistance, as well as, address long-term needs. By supporting a wide range of approaches such as; adopting prevention strategies, building on partnerships with the private sector, identifying and encouraging community-based efforts and exploring tax-based strategies, state leaders can help improve the lives of children and families while strengthening local economies.

The Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force makes the following assumptions regarding the current state of Colorado's efforts to reduce poverty:

1. Many state agency program goals do not highlight efforts to reduce poverty or increase economic opportunity for Colorado families.
2. Colorado lacks comprehensive poverty prevention policies and programs to which state agencies could bind their departmental goals.
3. Public assistance programs are safety net programs not intended to reduce poverty.
4. State departments face barriers working beyond the silos created by federal government funding.
5. The state lacks meaningful program evaluation for measuring Colorado family economic health and self-sufficiency.
6. The state lacks an accessible comprehensive database of programs using best practices for necessary work support systems to promote economic opportunity or poverty reduction.