

CCWRO Weekly New Welfare News - #2002-06

February 11, 2002

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-- THE BUSH 2003 TANF BUDGET AND MORE

George Bush released his 2003 budget.

TANF BUDGET: The budget proposes to fund TANF at a level of \$16.5 billion. Though the caseload has gone down by 50%, there is nothing in the Bush budget that states what percentage of the money goes to "payments to families" and what percentage goes to "payments to bureaucrats". States have been fleecing TANF money for the past five (5) years and Bush's budget ignores the widespread Enronization of TANF money. Caseloads and payments to families go down or stay the same, while the number of bureaucrats go up.

Bush's budget would also restore the \$2 billion contingency fund that was intended to provide states with more money in case of a recession. This provision died in 2001.

CHILD CARE BUDGET: The child care block grants are also scheduled to expire this year. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2002 there was \$2.7 billion for child care. The 2003 budget proposes the same level of funding. This will end the policy of increasing the child care block grant by \$150 million each year.

CHILD SUPPORT: The Bush Budget calls for several changes in the child support area:

1. The budget would give the States the option of giving the money collected from non-custodial parents through IRS Tax intercept to former welfare recipients. Currently States can only do an IRS intercept to collect past-due child support, which is given to the government and not one penny goes to the children.

2. The budget would allow States to pass through up to \$100 in child support to the custodial families on welfare. Currently, some states pass through \$50 or \$100 (17 States pass through \$100 a family) to the families, but they have to pay the federal government the federal share of the money. The budget proposes that the federal government would waive the State payback of the federal share to States that increase the pass through amount of \$100 or start to pass through. Under this proposal if a state was passing through \$50 and decided to increase it to \$100, the federal share waiver would only apply to the \$50.
3. The Bush budget also has a new tax on custodial parents. Currently custodial parents have to pay \$25 application fee to get the government to collect child support. The Bush budget would apply an annual \$25 fee for the child support agency to collect child support for a custodial parent who has never been on TANF. And Bush said no new taxes. Not true.
4. The budget proposes that States be required to review and adjust, more frequently, the amount of money that the noncustodial parent has to pay. This is a good change, because it would force States to adjust the amount of the child support demanded based upon the actual ability of the noncustodial parent's ability to pay.

TRANSITIONAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE: This program provides for medical assistance for an additional year. This program expires this year. The budget proposes to extend this program for only one year.

-- TANF UPDATE - TANF Briefing on Capitol Hill

(February 5--Washington, D.C.) More than 200 people filled a Capitol Hill hearing room today for an unprecedented briefing on welfare policy led by low-income parents. Hailing from Connecticut to California, the ten women shared moving stories about their struggles against domestic violence, racial discrimination, and poverty in the wake of the 1996 welfare reform laws.

Helen Nickens of Mexico, Missouri and the organization Grass Roots Organizing urged the representatives of the eighty congressional offices in attendance to address rampant racial discrimination and other violations of fair treatment when Congress reauthorizes the federal welfare laws later this year. "Black women on welfare in my county are rarely told about the job training and other services that might help our families escape poverty."

Innocencia Nolasco of the Brooklyn-based community group Make the Road By Walking said that the failure of local welfare offices to provide multi-lingual services has meant that tens of thousands of eligible families in need do not receive assistance. "I had exhausted all of my savings and was unable to work anymore because of health problems but the welfare office could not help me because I did not speak English." She also called for the restoration of benefits to immigrant families cut off from aid by the 1996 laws.

Representative John Conyers, a senior Democrat from Detroit, denounced these instances of "racial profiling" within the welfare system and urged Congress to "adopt a welfare system that lifts all families out of poverty."

Representative Dennis Kucinich, a Cleveland Democrat and chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus opened the briefing by acknowledging the courage of the women who testified. "Congress must listen to the voices of parents on welfare if we have any hope of reducing poverty for our children and families" he said.

Norma Jean Bauer of JEDI for Women in Salt Lake City, Utah called on Congress to eliminate all marriage incentives within the current welfare laws that put women at risk of domestic violence and violated their rights to privacy and choice. "My caseworker told me I had to return to a husband that beat me if I wanted to see my children. These marriage-first policies can tear apart families."

Thunderous applause greeted Melissa Garcia of LIFETIME in Chico, California when she shared her story of overcoming domestic abuse, homelessness and the objections of her caseworker to attend college and graduate school. "Marriage didn't ultimately solve poverty for me and it won't for thousands of other women. Training and education will."

"You'll rarely see a Capitol Hill policy briefing that moves the audience to tears," said Professor Frances Fox Piven, author of *Poor People's Movements* and *Regulating the Poor* and a co-moderator of the briefing. "We heard remarkable stories that should challenge policy makers to take a serious look at the flaws in our country's welfare system."

The "Civil Rights and Strong Families-New Poverty Reduction Strategies Briefing" was sponsored by Grassroots Organizing for Welfare Leadership (GROWL), a national network of welfare rights organizations based in Oakland, California. To see the testimony and program from the briefing and other welfare policy resources visit www.ctwo.org/growl or contact dhosang@ctwo.org.

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EMERGENCY REGULATION UNDER CONSIDERATION BY 2/13/02

EMERGENCY REGULATION ACTION SUBMITTED TO OAL ON: 02/08/02

AGENCY: DEPT. OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

TOPIC: Location of Persons and Assets

SECTION AFFECTED: California Code of Regulations, (CCR), Title 22, and Sections 110413 -- 113300

Unless OAL approves or disapproves the regulations sooner, the last day for public comment is 02/13/2002

OAL DECISION DUE: no later than 02/19/2002
AGENCY CONTACT: (916) 464-5087

STATISTICS OF THE WEEK - Homeless Assistance - 1/02

We were lucky to locate fresh data on Homeless Assistance. The Welfare to Work data has not been published by DSS since 9/01.

The data contained in reports known as CA 237 HA reveal that when the month ended, there were 1,595 cases pending. During the month counties received 4,480 applications for homeless assistance. They acted on 4,452 cases. At the end of the month statewide there were 1,623 cases pending.

Homeless assistance has two (2) parts: (a) temporary assistance, which is where the county is suppose to give the applicants funds for temporary lodging - this is suppose to be done on the same day. And then there is permanent homeless assistance: this is where the county is suppose to pay for last months rent and the deposit, if otherwise eligible. Permanent homeless assistance is required to be acted upon on the date of application, but no later than the next working day. If during the month there were 4,480 applications, then on the average there were 220 application a day. If 1,623 cases have been carried forward, that represents a week and a half worth of estimated cases. It appears from this data that counties are violating the law and not acting on the homeless assistance application on time as required by State law.

The report reveals the counties that have cases carried over at the end of the month:

Alameda - 13 cases	San Jouquin - 2
El Dorado - 84 - Very Guilty	Santa Clara - 2
Fresno - 1	Shasta - 1,237 wow - talk about being guilty - this may be incompetent reporting.
Glenn - 56 - Very Guilty	Siskiyou- 31 - Real Bad
Imperial - 10 - Not good	Solano - 22 - Real Bad
Inyo- 23 - Real Bad	Sutter- 25- Real Bad
Lake -2	Tehema - 1
Los Angeles - 0 - wow.	Ventura-7
Marin - 84- Very Guilty	Yuba-4
Mendocino - 1	All other counties not mentioned reported zero carryover cases.
Modoc - 1	
Monterey- 2	
San Francisco - 11	

CWD VICTIMS OF THE WEEK –

LOS ANGELES COUNTY TRIES TO STOP RECIPIENT'S FOOD STAMPS FOR FAILING TO APPEAR AT RECERTIFICATION WITHOUT GIVING A NOTICE

On 7/9/01, Los Angeles County notified Mr. 2001204074 that effective July 31, 2001, he and his child would no longer receive food stamp benefits because he did not appear at a recertification appointment.

Mr. 2001204074 testified that he had never received a letter scheduling this alleged appointment. His roommate also testified that no appointment letter was received from the county. Moreover, he saw the worker in July, after the letter was mailed, and the worker never said anything to him about the alleged appointment.

This victim filed for a fair hearing and received a decision stating "Los Angeles County shall provide the claimant an opportunity to complete recertification documents and attend an interview, the county shall approve claimant's FS as otherwise eligible effective August 1, 2001."

HUMBOLDT COUNTY VICTIM IS TERRORIZED BY SECURITY GUARD AND HUMBOLDT COUNTY BUREAUCRATS AND DENIED EXPEDITED SERVICES FOR FIVE DAYS

Ms. 2001200079 applied for emergency food stamps on 5/3/01. She reported that she was homeless and requested expedited service food stamp benefits. She was given an appointment for 5/7/01.

She appeared for her 5/7/01 appointment 10 minutes late. Because she was 10 minutes late, the arrogant Humboldt county welfare bureaucrats refused to interview her for emergency food stamps. When she tried to complain about this terrorist act, she was attacked by the security guard and told that she could not come back into the building. Subsequently, she was criminally and unlawfully denied the right to apply for food stamps on 5/8/01, 5/9/01, 5/10/01, and 5/11/01. Finally, on 5/14/01, she was allowed to reapply.

She filed for a hearing and the claim was dismissed because "...the treatment of the claimant by the American Star Guard at the CWD as the issue is not within the scope of the state hearing process.

How sad-- denied expedited food stamps five times and denied due process. How sick.

CCWRO SERVICES AVAILABLE TO LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAMS & WELFARE RECIPIENTS REFERRED TO US BY LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAMS

Types of Services Offered:

Litigation, Fair Hearing Representation, Fair Hearing Consultation, Informational Services, Research Services, In depth Consultation.

Programs Covered

CalWORKs, Welfare to Work (WtW), Food Stamps, Medi-Cal and Refugee Immigration Problems

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Tel. 916-736-0616

After 6 PM - 916-387-8341

Message/cell number 916-712-0071

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