

CCWRO Weekly New Welfare News

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In Brief

● **No car - most likely no job in California.** - In Sacramento County a group of organizations are trying to redesign the county welfare-to-work system to help welfare recipients become self-sufficient. The county reported that 75% of welfare families do not have a car. Then an expert on jobs reported that 90% of the jobs in California require a car. In conclusion counties ignore the real barrier to employment and talk about engagement, job search, unpaid work, etc.

Thanksgiving Message from Welfare Kids of California

For us poor kids it has been a bad year
No COLA for the fourth consecutive year
Food Stamps run out by the 20th
And thanksgiving falls on the 27th
While many throw food away
We go to sleep hungry
They say that hope is on its way
But all can see is that on Christmas eve
Again we will go to sleep the same way.
And no Santa Claus for us kids,
Just another day of misery is our way.

Outcomes of AB 1808 Annual \$230 Million Addition to the County Single Allocation

In 2006, the California State Legislature passed AB 1808 giving counties \$230 million annually to increase welfare to work engagement and reduce sanctions. This was added to the county single allocation. To pay for it, the 2006-2007 state budget suspended the meager CalWORKs COLA that would have cost only \$143 million. In the 2007-2008 state budget CalWORKs COLA was again suspended that would have only cost \$124 million.

Today, impoverished families with children live on fixed income at 1989 level when milk cost \$1.44, a loaf of bread cost less than \$1 and a first class stamp cost 22¢. In 2008, families pay more than \$3 for a gallon of milk, over \$2-3 for a loaf of bread, and 42¢ for a first class stamp - not to mention the cost of diapers, formula and other basic necessities of everyday life.

So what did Californians get for spending \$460 million and continuing?

❑ **Enrollee Engagement** - up from 57% in October, 2006 to 70% in September, 2008.

CCWRO ANALYSIS: This is a 13% increase at the cost of \$35 million per percentage point.

❑ **Enrollees Sanctioned** - up from 20% in October, 2006 to 21% in September, 2008. Although more people are engaged, there are more sanctions. The rate of WtW enrollees sanctions has gone up by 1%.

CCWRO ANALYSIS: The \$460 did not reduce the sanction rate. The reason for this is simple - there is no statewide process for curing the sanction. The counties get the money and they get to decide what they want to do with it.

❑ **Enrolled participants getting jobs - DOWN** from 10% in October, 2006 to 8% in September, 2008.

❑ **Enrolled participants getting jobs that results in termination of benefits** - 3% in October, 2006 and 3% in September, 2008.

CCWRO ANALYSIS: The \$460 million did not result in more people becoming self-sufficient. The primary alleged goal of welfare-to-work was to get welfare recipients jobs and make them self-sufficient. At least that is the propaganda that the welfare industry espoused when they lobbied for the \$230 million.

Thus, we reviewed the impact that the \$460 million has had on employment for welfare recipients. We are fully cognizant of the impact that it had on the employment of the welfare industry. Many more people were hired in the welfare industry. Many of them got a raise during this same time period welfare recipients did not get a COLA. The results are not good. More people being "engaged" has meant that more people are going through the WtW "pavlovian tunnels" and less people are finding work because they are too busy meeting the commands and demands welfare industry and not able to spend time finding a job.

The number of families getting jobs that makes them ineligible for welfare remains at 3% a month.

❑ For September 2008 unduplicated participants not getting transportation supportive services - 44% no transportation paid.