



June 12, 2017

Support the Welfare Reform and Upward Mobility Act, S. 1252 and H.R. 2832

On behalf of our activist community, I urge you to call your senators and representative and ask them to cosponsor the Welfare Reform and Upward Mobility Act, S. 1252 and H.R. 2832, sponsored by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio). This bill would significantly reform welfare and get more families back to work by promoting accountability, reducing spending, and decentralizing control by returning it to the states.

The Welfare Reform and Upward Mobility Act would greatly increase work requirements for welfare reform. The bill authorizes 20 hours per week work activation programs for adults without dependents and a similar program for adults with dependents that can be fulfilled by both parents or just one parent. This provides for a month safety window to meet for 5 hours per week with a state job research employee while it allows for an exemption for parents with children under six. It also creates a work authorization program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients that would be phased in over a period of five years.

Works requirements are an effective way to reduce usage of the program, spending, and get people back to work. This is best exemplified by the fact that 13 counties in Alabama saw food stamp participation drop by about 85 percent once work requirements were reinstated. They are effective, beneficial, and accomplish their goals.

One of the most important parts of the programs is that it transitions power from the federal government to the states. The Welfare Reform and Upward Mobility Act creates programs that provide resources such as vocational education, job training, community service programs, and job search assistance that are entirely run by the states. It also block grants federal housing funds to the states so they have full control over their various housing programs. States are better qualified to know what their citizens need so leaving it to them is a great way to address the needs of the disadvantaged.

Fortunately, the bill does also increase accountability to oversee these programs to make sure they are being used effectively. The bill would require the state housing block grant program to

have a federal reporting requirement. It also requires the president to report the total amount that he intends to spend on means-tested welfare in the annual budget submission to congress. Each state that receives fund is required to report to the director of the Congressional Budget Office the total amount of the funds. This would prevent fraud and waste so the government has on record how much is needed and spent.

If this bill were passed, it would greatly cut down on spending and create more accountability. Returning it to the states would also reduce federal overreach and promote state autonomy. However, as President Reagan once said, "The best possible social program is a job." Getting people back to work by adding work requirements and creating programs to do just that would be effective in reducing poverty and increasing employment.

For these reasons, I urge you to call your senators and representative and ask them to cosponsor the Welfare Reform and Upward Mobility Act, S. 1252 and H.R. 2832.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Brandon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adam Brandon
President, FreedomWorks