



September 20, 2012

Ranking Member Orrin Hatch
Senate Committee on Finance

Chairman David Camp
House Committee on Ways and Means

Chairman John Kline
House Committee on Education and Workforce

Chairman Jim Jordan
Republican Study Committee

We urge your colleagues to support H.J.Res. 118 and S.J.Res. 50, your resolutions that would stop efforts by the Obama Administration to weaken the work requirements in the federal welfare program.

Importantly, the President does not have the authority to change critical elements of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. The nonpartisan Government Accountability Office has attested the administration must have congressional approval to roll back work requirements. This election year power-grab by the President could set a perilous precedence if it allowed to proceed, unchecked.

The welfare reform of the 1990s earned bipartisan support and successfully lowered welfare rolls, getting people off of government assistance and back to work. Stripping the TANF program of its work requirements represents a huge step backwards in these major efforts to transform the federal welfare state.

Before reform in 1996, states were awarded more federal money for increasing caseloads. The promise of more federal cash clearly incentivized states to keep people on welfare. Replacing these metrics with ones that encouraged states to move people off of their welfare rolls was a critical part of the cost-savings and increased success of the program; welfare rolls were reduced by nearly two-thirds after the reforms were implemented.

As a result, spending decreased dramatically. The decade after reform was implemented saw welfare spending fall by a third. In contrast, welfare spending as a whole has exploded in the post-“stimulus” Obama-Pelosi-Reid world; taxpayers are now on the hook for over \$700 billion a year to pay for nearly 80 federal assistance programs, according to the Heritage Foundation.

The Obama Administration’s attempt to waive work requirements for the TANF program will grow the welfare state further. By waiving work requirements, the administration would turn on its head the incentives



instituted in the 1996 reform, and again begin encouraging states to increase their welfare caseloads.

We urge your colleagues in both chambers to support the resolution to disapprove of the Obama Administration's dismantling of the welfare reform law of 1996. Support for this resolution shows that lawmakers know the solutions for the economy should champion American workers, not discourage them.

Sincerely,

60 Plus Association, Jim Martin, Chairman
Advance Arkansas Institute, Dan Greenberg, President
American Commitment, Phil Kerpen, President
American Conservative Union, Al Cardenas, Chairman
Americans for Tax Reform, Grover Norquist, President
Blue Grass Institute, Jim Waters, President
Cascade Policy Institute, Tina Pisenti, Executive Vice President & COO
Center for Freedom and Prosperity, Andrew F. Quinlan, President
Center for Individual Freedom, Timothy Lee, Vice President of Legal and Public Affairs
Citizen Outreach, Chuck Muth, President
Coalition for Citizens Against Government Waste, Thomas Schatz, President
Committee for Justice, Curt Levey, President
Competitive Enterprise Institute, Hans Bader, Senior Attorney
The Conservative Caucus, Peter J. Thomas, Chairman
Conservative HQ, Richard Viguerie, Chairman
Cost of Government Center, Mattie Duppler, Executive Director
Faith and Freedom Coalition, Ralph Reed, Chairman
Faith and Freedom Coalition, Gary Cox, Executive Director
Florida Center-Right Coalition, Rick Watson, Chairman
Frontiers of Freedom, George Landrith, President
Heritage Action for America, Michael Needham, CEO
Hispanic Leadership Fund, Mario H. Lopez, President
Independent Women's Voice, Heather Higgins, President and CEO
Institute for Policy Innovation, Tom Giovanetti, President
Less Government, Seton Motley, President
Let Freedom Ring, Colin A. Hanna, President
Liberty University Law School, The Honorable Ken Blackwell, Visiting Professor
The Maine Heritage Policy Center, J. Scott Moody, CEO
National Taxpayers Union, Duane Parde, President
Pelican Institute for Public Policy, Kevin P. Kane, President
Renewing American Leadership Action, Dr. Jim Garlow, Chairman
Tea Party Nation, Judson Philips, Chairman
The Weyrich Lunch, Morton Blackwell, Chairman