

**RESOLUTION 0109145**

**Urging the State Legislature to fully draw down federal TANF allocation and continue flexible funding to the counties to assist working families up to 200% of the federal poverty guidelines.**

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WHEREAS, in 1997 Cuyahoga County entered into a partnership agreement with the State of Ohio ushering in a new way Cuyahoga County delivers services.

WHEREAS, with the support of the State of Ohio a contracted consultant helped Cuyahoga County develop a community plan designing the service delivery model to focus on work rather than benefits and in which services were contracted out to our community partners, churches, non-profits.

WHEREAS, with the support of the State of Ohio the welfare cash assistance cases in Cuyahoga County, Ohio in 1997 were 26,900 and less than half by October 2000 at 12,829 and only 10,427 on March 1, 2001. The Commissioners of Cuyahoga County, Ohio committed Cuyahoga County to moving families off welfare and out of poverty, and only 50% of those that left are earning at or above the poverty level.

WHEREAS, Cuyahoga County with the support of the State of Ohio was the only County in the State that chose not to exempt the allowable 20% of its caseload based upon a polity decision and belief that everyone can work give the right supports, to lift people out of poverty by way of a social contract between the individual and the County.

WHEREAS, Cuyahoga County now experiences fewer families getting monthly welfare checks, the work of helping them emerge from abject poverty and improve their work skills needs to continue and be supported.

WHEREAS, it costs more to get and keep a family or three working at \$21,988.00 in government subsidy which includes childcare, health insurance, Earned Income Tax Credit, food stamps and the cost of skills upgrades than giving out cash assistance for that same family not working at \$12,852.00 which includes health insurance, food stamps and cash.

WHEREAS, Cuyahoga County along with community non-profits, faith based organizations and other provider agencies has creatively and effectively used Prevention Retention & Contingency dollars to develop and implement programs which help working families move off welfare in immediate employment programs, vocational skill upgrade programs, grandparent raising grandchildren support programs, teen pregnancy, and out of wedlock birth prevention programs, family stability and school support programs with the support of the State of Ohio.

WHEREAS, Cuyahoga County with the support of the State of Ohio contracted the assistance of over 280 community partners, including faith-based groups, schools, businesses, non-profit organizations and local public agencies to serve to all these families.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Cuyahoga County with the support of the State of Ohio has contracted over \$43 million in Prevention, Retention and Contingency since January of 2000 to community agencies to encourage self-sufficient working families.

AND, WHEREAS, the proposed budget for the 2002-2003 biennium does not provide for the continuation of programs Cuyahoga County has put in place for low-income families. And whereas, Ohio has \$721 million surplus in Ohio's federal TANF allocation funds that come from federal tax revenues redistributed to Ohio in its TANF Block Grant.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Cuyahoga County, Ohio that said Board calls upon the State Legislature to negotiate a state budget that fully draws down the federal TANF allocation for the State of Ohio and continues to allow County governments the flexibility to fund programs under the Prevention, Retention and Contingency which are already proving successful in preventing families from falling back onto cash assistance while improving their income levels.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Board be, and she is, hereby instructed to transmit a copy of this resolution to Bette Meyer, Deputy County Administrator/Health & Human Services.

On Motion of Commissioner McCormack, seconded by Commissioner Campbell, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted.

Ayes: McCormack, Campbell, Dimora.

Nays: None.

Resolution Adopted.

Marjorie J. Pettus

Clerk of the Board

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