



WAYS AND MEANS

CHAIRMAN KEVIN BRADY

H.R. 2952 “Improving Employment Outcomes of TANF Recipients Act” (Summary of Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute)

Measuring State Success in Helping TANF Recipients Find a Job
and Build a Successful Career

Sponsored by Ways and Means Member Rep. Boustany (R-LA)

Under this bill:

- States would be required to measure their success in achieving three goals: (1) moving TANF recipients off of welfare into work, (2) keeping these former recipients in work, and (3) helping them increase their earnings over time.
- Specifically, this bill would require states to measure:
 - The percentage of the state TANF caseload that leaves the program and has an adult in the family working two quarters (6 months) later;
 - The percentage of the state TANF caseload that leaves the program and has an adult in the family working four quarters (1 year) later; and
 - The median earnings of adults who leave the program and who are employed two quarters (6 months) later.
- Each state would work with the Department of Health and Human Services to set goals for these measures, taking into account the characteristics of recipients and a state’s economic conditions.
- In addition to creating measures of state performance, the introduced bill held back TANF funds beginning in FY 2018 to pay states only if they achieved certain targets. The amended bill creates performance measures and requires states to set targets, but does not tie funding to them so states have more time to develop these metrics and begin measuring performance.

Cost: No cost.

Support: There is bipartisan support from a broad range of groups, including the business community and think tanks, to include outcome measures in TANF that are aligned with other federal employment and training programs, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Background:

- The TANF statute currently requires states to engage 50% of their welfare caseload in work or work activities (i.e. work, job search, or job training) for a minimum number of hours each week.
- While the policy above measures a state's engagement of TANF recipients in activities, there is currently no measure of how states are helping welfare recipients leave TANF for work, or how well states are doing in helping these former recipients keep jobs and increase their earnings over time.

