



Summary of “Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion Act of 2000,” introduced by Rep. Herger (H.R. 4090 substitute amendment)

*Provisions on Family Formation, Marriage, Out-of-Wedlock Births, and Fathers*

**The bill would amend TANF purposes:**

- Sec. 101 would insert the phrase “healthy, 2-parent married families, and encourage responsible fatherhood” into the fourth purpose of the TANF program. Currently, the fourth purpose allows states to spend TANF funds to encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

**The bill would change TANF MOE requirements:**

- Sec. 103 would permit total spending under all state programs under the third and fourth TANF purposes to count as “qualified state expenditures” toward state maintenance of effort requirements. The change would allow states to count spending on non-needy families under the third and fourth purposes. Currently, only spending on needy families counts toward MOE requirements. (The third purpose is to prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies, while the fourth purpose is described above.)

**The bill would authorize \$1.6 billion for marriage and fatherhood promotion activities:**

- Sec. 103 would appropriate \$500 million over 5 years for a state competitive grants program called “Healthy Marriage Promotion,” which could be matched with an additional \$500 million over 5 years in TANF funds.
- Sec. 115 would appropriate \$500 million over 5 years for research and demonstration projects primarily for marriage promotion grants.
- Sec. 120 would appropriate \$100 million over 5 years for three new grants programs to promote and support responsible fatherhood and healthy marriages. These programs include (1) a direct competitive grants program for service projects, including “full service” grants and “limited purpose” grants under \$25,000 (2) two multi-site demonstration programs, and (3) national fatherhood promotion grants.

**The bill would redirect TANF bonuses to marriage funds:**

- Sec. 105 would repeal the high performance bonus and reallocate funds to a bonus to reward employment achievement. However, spending for the new bonus would be reduced by \$500 million over five years. The \$500 million would likely be redirected to the new marriage-related research and demonstration fund.
- Sec. 103 would repeal illegitimacy bonus and reallocate \$500 million over five years to marriage promotion grants.

**The bill would authorize states to use TANF funds to match marriage promotion grants:**

- Sec. 111 would permit a state receiving a marriage promotion grant to use other TANF funds for marriage promotion activities, and TANF funds used for marriage promotion activities would be considered state funds for purposes of 42 U.S.C. 603(a)(2) (grant matching funds).
- Sec. 111 would exclude federal TANF funds used to match marriage promotion grants from counting toward MOE requirements.

**The bill specifies a limited number of marriage activities that could be funded through marriage promotion grants:**

- Sec. 103 lists the following activities that could be funded under the "Healthy Marriage Promotion" state competitive grants program:
  - Public advertising campaigns on the value of marriage and needed skills
  - High school education on value of marriage, relationship skills, and budgeting
  - Marriage education and skills programs for non-married pregnant women and non-married expectant fathers.
  - Pre-marital education and skills programs for engaged and interested couples
  - Marriage enhancement and skills programs for married couples
  - Divorce reduction skills-based programs
  - Marriage mentoring programs that use married couples in at-risk communities
  - Programs to reduce the disincentives to marriage in means-tested programs if offered in conjunction with any activity described above.

**The bill specifies four objectives for projects funded under HHS fatherhood promotion grants:**

- Sec. 120 would authorize fatherhood promotion grants designed to test, evaluate, and replicate promising approaches to improving child outcome measures and accomplishing four objectives:
  - *Promoting responsible, caring and effective parenting*--through counseling, mentoring, parenting education, information dissemination, positive involvement.

- *Enhancing the abilities and commitment of unemployed or low income fathers to provide material support for their families*--through “assisting them to take full advantage of education, job training, and job search programs” (including one-stop) through outreach, referral, and coordination; improving work habits and work skills; and encouragement and support of child support payments.
  - *Improving fathers’ ability to effectively manage family business affairs*--through education, counseling, mentoring, including household management, budgeting, banking, financial transactions, time management, home maintenance.
  - *Encouraging and supporting healthy marriages and married fatherhood*--through premarital education and inventories, marriage preparation programs, couples counseling, marriage therapy, skill enhancement programs including reduction of child abuse and domestic violence, information dissemination about the benefits of marriage.
- Sec. 120 would require some grantees to assess for and intervene to resolve domestic violence, child abuse and neglect; and to coordinate with child welfare, domestic violence programs, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS service providers, and TANF, child support, and workforce investment programs.
  - Sec. 120 would require the Secretary of HHS, in awarding grants to consider geography, urban/rural location, and project size and methods to achieve project diversity, including working with child support programs to help fathers satisfy arrearages. The Secretary may give preference to projects in which a majority of the clients are low-income fathers.
  - Sec. 120 would require that funded activities “be available on the same basis to all fathers, and expectant fathers, able to benefit from such projects and activities, including married and unmarried fathers and custodial and noncustodial fathers, with particular attention to low-income fathers, and to mothers and expectant mothers on the same basis as to fathers.”

**The bill would amend TANF state plan requirements:**

- Sec. 103 would require the TANF assistance program to “encourage equitable treatment of married, two-parent families.”
- Sec. 112 would require a state to establish annual, specific numerical performance goals and outcome improvement plans with respect to each of the four TANF purposes in its state plan.
- Sec. 112 would require, as is similarly done in current plan requirements, a state to describe strategies the state is undertaking, including efforts to reduce teen pregnancy, in its state plan.

**The bill would require additional data collection on marriage and out-of-wedlock births:**

- Sec. 113 would require states to collect monthly disaggregated data (and report to HHS quarterly), including the race and educational level of each adult and minor parent in the family and the marital status of the parents or guardians of the child, and whether the parents or guardians are living, and if the parents are not then married, whether the paternity of the child has been established.
- Sec. 116 would require the Census Bureau to implement a new longitudinal survey to allow for assessment of a range of welfare reform outcomes, including out-of-wedlock childbearing and marriage.

**The bill would add authority for HHS super-waivers:**

- Sec. 601 would authorize super-waivers to allow states to conduct demonstration projects involving at least two programs, combining funds from and waiving requirements of title IV-A (TANF), IV-D (child support) title XX (social services block grant) and tile III (unemployment insurance) of the Social Security Act. Demonstration waivers must be for the purpose of “helping parents build stronger families,” supporting working families, or helping families escape welfare dependency.

Prepared by Vicki Turetsky - 4/17/02