HELPING FAMILIES ACCESS FEDERAL INCOME SUPPORTS

SB 20-029
Senators Fields & Moreno/Representatives Duran & Coleman

We are in the midst of an unprecedented crisis. As the legislature makes difficult choices about the budget and how to support Colorado’s recovery now and into the future, it is critical to support families who are facing some of the greatest barriers to security.

Families enrolled in TANF are experiencing extreme poverty and need additional money in their pockets as soon as possible to help weather the immediate effects of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The additional barriers that these families will face in meeting basic needs now and as state begins to recover make it even more critical to prioritize a way to provide cash assistance to these families as soon as possible.

SB20-029 would provide an immediate, one-time $500 payment to families enrolled in TANF to help these families meet their basic needs right now.

This one-time payment will help families make ends meet during the current crisis, and will help make up for the fact that TANF Basic Cash Assistance has not adjusted for inflation since the program was created in 1996, and hasn’t kept up with the cost of living in Colorado.

Opportunity to improve the lives of children in poverty

Experiencing poverty can inhibit early brain development and negatively impact children’s ability to succeed in school and develop social-emotional skills.

- Children experiencing poverty between birth and age 5 completed 2 fewer years of school and were nearly 3 times more likely to be in poor health as adults.

A $3,000 difference in annual income in the first 5 years of a child’s life is associated with:

- The equivalent of 20 SAT points later in life.
- A 17% increase in the child’s future earnings.
- 135 additional work hours per year as adults.

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Poverty drives housing insecurity

- As housing costs have continued to increase in Colorado, Basic Cash Assistance (BCA) has not kept up and is far below the cost of rent for a family.
- In every county in Colorado, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment exceeds the monthly amount of BCA for a family with one adult and two children
- 12.5% of families in Colorado receiving BCA are experiencing homelessness.

Poverty impacts health

- Child poverty is linked to higher rates of asthma and obesity, poor language development, low birthweight, increased infant mortality, and an increased risk of injuries.
- In Colorado, 23.8 percent of people living at or below 138% of the federal poverty line report being in fair or poor health.

Policies and systems create inequities in opportunity

- Colorado families of all backgrounds work hard to provide a better life for their children.
- However, poverty rates among kids in Colorado vary by race and ethnicity, as a result of policies and practices that have created and maintained inequitable opportunities in areas such as housing and employment.
- Children of color in Colorado are significantly more likely to experience poverty than their white peers.

Supporters of SB 20-029

9to5 Colorado  
Adams County  
All Families Deserve a Chance Coalition  
Aurora Health Alliance  
Bayaud Enterprises  
The Bell Policy Center  
Boulder Food Rescue  
Center for Health Progress  
Center for Work Education and Employment  
Children’s Hospital Colorado  
Coloradoans for the Common Good  
Colorado Center on Law and Policy  
Colorado Children’s Campaign  
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless  
Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition  
Colorado Fiscal Institute  
Colorado Foundation for Universal Health Care  
Colorado Home Visiting Coalition  
Colorado Social Legislation Committee  
Colorado Springs Food Rescue  
CommunityWorks  
The Consortium  
The Denver Foundation  
Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County  
Emergency Family Assistance Association  
Energy Outreach Colorado  
Florence Crittenton Services  
The Gathering Place  
Health District of Northern Larimer County  
Human Services Network  
Hunger Free Colorado  
Illuminate Colorado  
Interfaith Alliance of Colorado  
LiveWell Colorado  
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry–Colorado  
National Association of Social Workers—Colorado  
Parent Possible  
People’s Advocacy Council  
Project Self-Sufficiency of Loveland-Fort Collins  
Refugee Action Coalition of Colorado  
Raise Colorado  
Rodfei Tzedek  
St. Francis Center  
Together Colorado  
The Women’s Foundation of Colorado

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