



**The Council
of State
Governments**

September 19, 2019

Chairman Richard E. Neal
House Committee on Ways and Means
2309 Cannon Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Kevin Brady
House Committee on Ways and Means
1011 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady,

As a coalition of membership organizations representing the nation's governors, state legislatures, counties, cities, and state and local health and human services agencies, we are writing to urge you to provide a one-year extension to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF provides essential funding to help state and local governments deliver an array of services that help low-income families achieve economic mobility. A one-year extension will provide necessary stability to the program while we build consensus for a bipartisan, long-term TANF reauthorization that enacts policy reforms which further advance TANF's mission to help families meet their basic needs and transition to self-sufficiency.

Since its last reauthorization expired in 2010, TANF has been renewed through a series of short-term extensions that have largely left the program unchanged. This approach to policymaking has hindered efforts to modernize TANF to create the conditions that help people meet their potential, talents, and skills. State and local leaders recognize and embrace the opportunity to implement reforms to TANF that advances this objective. A bipartisan effort is needed that engages the collective expertise of local, state, and federal policymakers.

To that end, the National Governors Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Association of Counties, the American Public Human Services Association, and the US Conference of Mayors have begun working together to develop a plan for a bipartisan TANF policy agenda that is rooted in the following principles:

- *Empower state and local governments with flexibility to innovate and be responsive to the needs of their community to continue to meet core purposes through economic downturns.*
- *Redesign the performance management structure of TANF to incentivize state and local investment in programs that result in longer term positive employment and economic wellbeing outcomes for parents, caregivers and families.*
- *Provide a long-term TANF reauthorization which, unlike short term extensions, offers state and local governments predictability and stability.*

In the coming months we look forward to a productive conversation with Congress to enact a long-term TANF reauthorization that enables state and local agencies to work with children and families to overcome barriers and support their well-being. Until a long-term reauthorization is achieved, it is critical that Congress authorizes a one-year extension to TANF so that families can continue to access essential services. Thank you for the opportunity to bring this important matter to your attention.

Should you have questions or need further information, please contact Matthew Lyons at mlyons@aphsa.org or Maribel Ramos at mramos@nga.org.

Sincerely,



Tracy Wareing Evans
President and CEO
American Public Human Services Association



Bill McBride
Executive Director
National Governors Association



Matthew Chase
Executive Director
National Association of Counties



Tim Storey
Executive Director
National Conference of State Legislatures



Clarence Anthony
CEO and Executive Director
National League of Cities



Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
The U.S. Conference of Mayors



Marc Ott
Executive Director
International City/County Management Association



David Adkins
CEO and Executive Director
The Council of State Governments

cc:

Rep. Danny K. Davis, Chairman
Rep. Jackie Walorski, Ranking Member
Rep. Gwen Moore
Rep. Dwight Evans
Rep. Tom Reed
Rep. Jimmy Gomez
Rep. Stephanie Murphy
Rep. Brad Wenstrup
Rep. Ron Estes
Rep. Judy Chu
Rep. Terri A. Sewell