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Report to the
Colorado General Assembly

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force

Prepared by

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Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force

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December 2009

To Members of the Sixty-seventh General Assembly:

Pursuant to House Bill 09-1064, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force is required to assess current state policies and practices that promote economic opportunity and poverty reduction; study and evaluate federally supported and state-supported programs that serve persons living in poverty, with the goal of recommending improvements for the nutrition and employment programs; examine factors that contribute to poverty and its economic impact; and develop a comprehensive plan, by December 31, 2010, for reducing poverty by at least 50 percent in Colorado by 2019.

At its meeting on November 10, 2009, the Legislative Council reviewed the report of this committee. A motion to forward this report and the bills therein for consideration in the 2010 session was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Brandon Shaffer
Chair

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This report is also available on line at:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/PovertyReductionTaskForce

Executive Summary

Task Force Charge

Pursuant to House Bill 09-1064, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force is required to:

- assess current state policies and practices that promote economic opportunity and poverty reduction with regard to:
  - building family assets and financial stability;
  - increasing educational opportunities;
  - expanding the work force;
  - using targeted tax policies to make work pay; and
  - addressing work-support issues.
- study and evaluate federally supported and state-supported programs that serve persons living in poverty, with the goal of recommending improvements for the nutrition and employment programs;
- examine factors that contribute to poverty and its economic impact; and
- develop a comprehensive plan, by December 31, 2010, for reducing poverty by at least 50 percent in Colorado by 2019.

The task force must meet at least four times each year, and continues through July 1, 2014.

Subcommittees. As required by House Bill 09-1064, the task force appointed five subcommittees that included representatives of executive branch agencies, local governments, business and labor organizations, educational institutions, advocates, and other individuals directly impacted by the work of the task force. Each subcommittee was chaired by a member of the task force and was required to advise the task force in completing its duties. Subcommittees were appointed in the following subject areas:

- Housing and Utilities;
- Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports;
- Access to and Coordination of Benefits and Nonprofit/Faith-Based Services;
- Scope of the Problem and Metrics; and
- Poverty and Education.

Members of the subcommittees did not receive compensation for their services or reimbursement of their expenses. The subcommittees were not staffed by legislative staff.

Task Force Activities

The task force met six times during the 2009 interim. Task force meetings were devoted to the discussion of poverty definitions and measurements, statewide poverty data compared to data from other states, state programs related to poverty reduction and economic development, and specific impacts of poverty. The task force heard testimony from agencies of state, regional, and local governments, as well as various entities involved in poverty reduction and economic development. In addition, each of the five subcommittees met at least four times over the interim. Updates on subcommittee activities and suggested recommendations were presented to the full task force for discussion. An opportunity for public testimony was provided at each meeting.

Measures of poverty. The task force was briefed by various experts on the use of different measures of poverty and on statewide poverty rates under each measurement. State departments offered additional information concerning eligibility guidelines and the evaluative methods of state programs relevant to poverty reduction. The Scope of the Problem and Metrics Subcommittee further explored the issue. The task force recommended Bill F, which specifies that the duties of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force include developing a relevant, fluid model for assessing progress toward reducing poverty and increasing economic opportunity in Colorado. The bill also stipulates that the task force will recommend that the General Assembly adopt the task force's model for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of certain public programs and policies.

Mitigating the impacts of poverty. The task force considered perspectives from individuals, employers, county representatives, and other organizations regarding challenges for low-income individuals and ways to mitigate the impacts of poverty by providing work supports and opportunities for economic development. The Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports Subcommittee and the Housing and Utilities Subcommittee further explored the issue. Presentations and witness testimony regarding targeted tax policy led the task force to propose Bill A, which makes an Earned Income Tax Credit a first priority Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) refund method.

Presentations from the Department of Corrections regarding pre-release and employment training programs for offenders, and input from ex-offenders, representatives of apprenticeship programs, and the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition regarding barriers to employment for ex-offenders, prompted the task force to recommend Bill B. This bill clarifies civil liability regarding negligent hiring practices for an employer that hires a person with a criminal record.

In response to presentations from organizations concerned with homelessness and task force discussions regarding the need for affordable housing, the task force recommended Bill G, which authorizes certain public entities to enter into voluntary agreements affecting rent on private residential property.

Improved access to benefits and reduced service silos within state programs. The task force received an overview from state departments regarding programs that reduce poverty or increase economic opportunity. Substantial task force discussion was devoted to the need for such programs. Particular focus was given to program evaluation and proposals to increase efficiency and decrease "service silos" within program administration. Service silos occur when departments with related programs and common goals fail to communicate with each other effectively. Individuals with experience accessing the state benefits system offered testimony on the issue, and the Poverty and Education Subcommittee and the Access to and Coordination of Benefits and Nonprofit/Faith-Based Services Subcommittee further explored such questions.

As a result of its discussions on the need to make poverty reduction and family self-sufficiency a focus of all programs, the task force recommended Bill H, which allows collaboratives concerned with the provision of multi-agency services to extend membership to additional entities. The task force's focus on ways to improve evaluative measures of state programs led to Bill D, which authorizes the Department of Human Services to use a portion of existing appropriations to conduct an independent evaluation of the Statewide Strategic Use Fund. In response to task force discussions regarding inefficiencies experienced by individuals accessing state benefits, particularly problems experienced by ex-offenders, the task force proposed Bill C. The bill concerns a reduction in barriers to obtaining identity-related documents. In response to presentations concerning the difficulty of navigating eligibility guidelines and the impact of the "cliff effect," which occurs when an increase in earned income leads to a loss of benefits, the task force recommended Bill E. The bill concerns the administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Additional committee discussion. The task force considered but declined to recommend legislation directing counties to pursue federal Medicaid matching funds for county mill levy dollars in order to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities. The benefits and disadvantages of such legislation were addressed in testimony from advocates for individuals with developmental disabilities and from representatives of community centered boards. Further task force discussion was devoted to proposed cuts to the Aid for the Needy Disabled Program.

Scope of the Problem in Colorado

During several meetings, both the task force and the Scope of the Problem and Metrics Subcommittee considered the issue of how to most accurately and efficiently measure poverty in Colorado. Numerous poverty metrics have been developed nationally. Legislative Council Staff provided information to the task force on three of the most widely recognized and used measures of poverty: (1) the federal poverty threshold, also known as the "official poverty measure;" (2) the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) poverty measure; and (3) the Self-Sufficiency Standard. Each of these poverty measures differ in how they define and measure poverty. As a result, the population classified as "living in poverty" differs depending on the measure employed.

Assessment of Current Policies and Procedures that Address Poverty

In order to assess current policies and procedures that address poverty, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force requested that Legislative Council Staff survey all executive departments regarding programs that alleviate poverty or provide economic opportunities to low-income Coloradans. The survey results were compiled into a memorandum, available on the task force's website, that provides information on programs in the areas of health, housing and utilities, food, child care, employment, education, and other services.

The memorandum and supporting documents were presented to the task force at its August 18, 2009, meeting. At this and subsequent meetings, representatives from select executive departments appeared before the task force to answer questions and to provide further detail on programs that address poverty or increase economic opportunity.

Task Force Advisory Group

The implementing legislation for the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force, House Bill 09-1064, allows the task force to accept staff support from public and private entities, in addition to staff support from Legislative Council Staff and the Office of Legislative Legal Services. In order to assist with the work of the task force, a group of representatives from interested parties and organizations formed a task force advisory group. This informal group met several times during the months leading up to the initial convening of the task force in order to create a plan for the task force's activities. The group provided assistance in setting the task force's agenda and establishing a framework for the subcommittees. In addition, the members of the advisory group organized and staffed subcommittee meetings and summarized subcommittee recommendations regarding the development of the task force's strategic plan to reduce poverty and increase economic opportunity. Members of the task force advisory group also outlined subcommittee input regarding the issues to be addressed by the task force in future years, and on proposed time frames to address such issues. Members of the advisory group were instrumental in drafting a report that frames the issues of poverty and economic opportunity, conveys the findings and recommendations of the five subcommittees, and identifies issues to be addressed by the task force in future years. That report can be found on the task force website at the following address:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/PovertyReductionTaskForce

Task Force Recommendations

As a result of task force deliberations, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force recommends eight bills for consideration in the 2010 legislative session.

Bill A — TABOR and the Earned Income Tax Credit. Bill A makes an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) a first priority Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) refund method. The bill increases the threshold necessary to trigger a temporary income tax rate reduction as a method to provide a TABOR refund so that the rate reduction does not occur unless there is also an earned income tax credit refund.

Bill B — Clarifying Civil Liability for an Employer Hiring a Person with a Criminal Record. Bill B prohibits information regarding an employee's criminal history from being introduced as evidence against an employer in a civil action regarding negligent hiring practices if:

- the nature of the criminal history does not bear a direct relationship to the facts underlying the cause of action;
- a court order has sealed any record of a criminal case or a pardon was issued before the occurrence of the civil action; or
- the record of an arrest or charge did not result in a criminal conviction.

Bill B does not eliminate the requirement for criminal history background checks in hiring for certain employment.

Bill C — Reduction in Barriers to Obtaining Identity-Related Documents. Bill C prohibits the state from charging a fee for a certified birth or death record if the applicant is a county department of social services or human services or the applicant has a letter of referral from such a county department. Bill C also prohibits the state from charging a fee for a Colorado identification card to an applicant referred by, or released within the prior six months from, the Department of Corrections, the Division of Youth Corrections, or a county jail. Bill C authorizes a court to grant a name change if a person has previously been convicted of a felony when specified conditions are found by the court. The bill directs the court to forward information on the name change to specified departments.

Bill D — Independent Evaluation of the Statewide Strategic Use Fund. Bill D authorizes the Department of Human Services to use a portion of existing appropriations to conduct an independent evaluation of the Statewide Strategic Use Fund (SSUF). Pursuant to the bill, the executive director of the Department of Human Services, after consultation with the Strategic

Allocation Committee, is authorized to contract with a qualified, independent entity to perform an evidence-based evaluation of the effectiveness of the SSUF in meeting the objectives of the Colorado Works Program, as well as the effectiveness of the individual initiatives and programs supported by the SSUF. Bill D allows the executive director to annually use up to 2 percent of the moneys allocated to the SSUF to contract for the evaluation. The bill requires the executive director to include a copy of the most recent evaluation in his or her annual report to the General Assembly on the SSUF.

Bill E — Administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Bill E requires the state Department of Human Services to adopt the maximum certification period allowable pursuant to federal law for the receipt of federal food assistance benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Additionally, Bill E requires the department to develop and implement a state outreach plan with the use of private and federal moneys to promote access to federal food benefits by eligible persons. The bill requires the department to submit the outreach plan for federal approval by September 1, 2010. The bill exempts the department from developing and implementing the outreach plan if sufficient federal or private moneys are not received. Bill E changes the name of the federal food stamps program to SNAP to reflect the federal name change. The bill also directs the department to implement a program or policy, pursuant to federal law, establishing broad-based categorical eligibility for federal food assistance benefits. At a minimum, the program or policy must remove the asset test for eligibility and increase the gross income test to 200 percent of the federal poverty level pursuant to federal law.

Bill F — Duties of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. Bill F specifies that the duties of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force include developing a relevant, fluid model for assessing progress toward reducing poverty and increasing economic opportunity in Colorado. Once a model is developed, the task force will recommend that the General Assembly adopt the task force's model for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of certain public programs and policies in achieving the goals of the task force.

Bill G — Authorization for Public Entities to Enter Voluntary Agreements Affecting Rent on Private Residential Property. The rent control statute in current law prohibits counties and municipalities from enacting any ordinance or resolution that would control rent on private residential property. Bill G clarifies that the rent control statute applies only to private residential housing units. The bill also clarifies that nothing in the rent control statute prohibits or restricts the right of a property owner and public entity from voluntarily entering into and enforcing an agreement that controls rent on a private residential housing unit, whether the agreement is entered into before, on, or after the effective date of the bill. An agreement authorized pursuant to Bill G may specify how long a unit is subject to its terms, whether or not the subsequent property owners are subject to the agreement, and remedies for early termination agreed to by both parties. Finally, the bill specifies that the rent control statute does not preclude public entities from cooperatively entering into an agreement, nor does it preclude the assignment of rights and remedies to any party to the agreement.

Bill H — Collaboration in the Provision of Multi-Agency Services. Currently, county departments of social services may enter into memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with certain agencies. The MOUs are designed to promote a collaborative system of local-level interagency oversight groups and individualized services and support teams to coordinate and manage the provision of services to children and families who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services. Currently, the following entities may be included in an MOU:

- local judicial districts;
- a county, district, or regional health department;
- a local school district or school districts;
- community mental health centers;
- behavioral health organizations;
- the division of youth corrections;
- a designated managed service organization for the provision of treatment services for alcohol and drug abuse; and
- a domestic abuse program.

Bill H includes a listing of additional agencies or entities that may also be included in an MOU. The additional agencies or entities that may be included are:

- community colleges and postsecondary career and technical education colleges or programs;
- early childhood councils;
- boards of cooperative services;
- regional service councils;
- family resource centers; and
- workforce centers.

Bill H clarifies that if any of these additional agencies or entities are included in the MOU, that agency or entity has the same rights and responsibilities as any other participant in the MOU.

Task Force Charge

Pursuant to House Bill 09-1064, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force is required to:

- assess current state policies and practices that promote economic opportunity and poverty reduction with regard to:
  - building family assets and financial stability;
  - increasing educational opportunities;
  - expanding the work force;
  - using targeted tax policies to make work pay; and
  - addressing work-support issues.
- study and evaluate federally supported and state-supported programs that serve persons living in poverty, with the goal of recommending improvements for the nutrition and employment programs;
- examine factors that contribute to poverty and its economic impact; and
- develop a comprehensive plan, by December 31, 2010, for reducing poverty by at least 50 percent in Colorado by 2019.

The task force must meet at least four times each year, and continues through July 1, 2014.

Subcommittees. As required by House Bill 09-1064, the task force appointed five subcommittees that included representatives of executive branch agencies, local governments, business and labor organizations, education organizations, advocates, and other individuals directly impacted by the work of the task force. Each subcommittee was chaired by a member of the task force and was required to advise the task force in completing its duties. Each subcommittee met at least four times and made recommendations to the full task force pertaining to a particular subject area. Subcommittees were appointed in the following subject areas:

- Housing and Utilities;
- Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports;
- Access to and Coordination of Benefits and Nonprofit/Faith-Based Services;
- Scope of the Problem and Metrics; and
- Poverty and Education.

Members of the subcommittees did not receive compensation for their services or reimbursement of their expenses. The subcommittees were not staffed by legislative staff. However, subcommittee meeting minutes and other materials are available on the task force's website. More detail on the discussions and recommendations of the subcommittees is available in a separate report published by the task force advisory group. That report can be found on the task force website at the following address:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/PovertyReductionTaskForce

Report to the General Assembly. On or before January 15, 2010, and on or before January 15 of each subsequent year until 2014, the task force is required to prepare a written report to the General Assembly that includes a summary of the work accomplished by the task force and a summary of its legislative recommendations. Additionally, the initial report submitted on or before January 15, 2010, is required to include:

- a general description of the scope of the problem in Colorado with respect to poverty;
- an initial assessment of current policies and procedures that address poverty;
- an outline of the issues being addressed by the task force; and
- the proposed time frame for addressing such issues.

This final report published by Legislative Council Staff includes a summary of the work of the task force and its legislative recommendations. Summaries of Legislative Council Staff research on the scope of the problem in Colorado and on state policies and procedures that address poverty are also incorporated or referenced in the report.

The task force did not propose recommendations concerning the outline of issues to be addressed in future meetings or the proposed time frame for addressing such issues. However, such questions were discussed at subcommittee meetings. To present the recommendations of the subcommittees, a separate report has been published with the assistance of the task force advisory group. This informal advisory group is composed of individuals and representatives from organizations interested in poverty reduction. A copy of the report is available on the task force's website at the following address:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/PovertyReductionTaskForce

Task Force Activities

The Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force met six times during the 2009 interim. Task force meetings were devoted to discussing poverty definitions and measurements, statewide poverty data compared to data from other states, state programs related to poverty reduction and economic development, and the specific impacts of poverty. The task force heard testimony from agencies of state, regional, and local governments, as well as various entities involved in poverty reduction and economic development, including:

- the Center for Law and Social Policy;
- the 9 to 5 National Association of Working Women;
- the Colorado Children's Campaign;
- the Colorado Community and Interagency Council on Homelessness;
- Invest in Kids and Nurse-Family Partnership;
- the Front Range Economic Strategy Center (FRESC);
- the Colorado Building and Trade Apprenticeship programs;
- county commissioners;
- county workforce centers and human services departments; and
- higher education institutions.

In addition, each of the five subcommittees met at least four times during the interim. Updates on subcommittee activities and suggested recommendations were presented to the full task force for discussion. Following is a summary of the activities of the task force.

Measures of Poverty

The task force was briefed by various experts on the use of different measures of poverty and on statewide poverty rates under each measurement. Particular attention was paid to the differences in the use and calculation of three measures of poverty:

- the federal poverty threshold, also known as the "official poverty measure;"
- the National Academy of Sciences poverty measure; and
- the Self-Sufficiency Standard.

An analysis of these three metrics and a comparison of the poverty rate using these metrics may be found in this report under the heading "Scope of the Problem in Colorado."

A Legislative Council Staff economist and a representative from the Colorado Children's Campaign presented information on the various measures of poverty and provided data regarding the poverty rate in Colorado compared to the national poverty rate. The presentations included information concerning data obtained by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, which indicates that the national poverty rate in 2008 was 13.2 percent, while Colorado's poverty rate was 11.4 percent. The task force also considered testimony from representatives of local governments regarding elements that affect the poverty rate in certain locations in the state, such as the eastern plains and Mesa County.

Numerous task force discussions addressed the role of poverty measurements in the eligibility guidelines and evaluative methods of state programs. In its discussions, the task force considered department surveys as well as testimony from representatives of state departments and from members of the public. The Scope of the Problem and Metrics Subcommittee further explored the issue.

Task force recommendation. To address issues concerning measures of poverty, the task force recommended Bill F, which specifies that the duties of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force include developing a relevant, fluid model for assessing progress toward reducing poverty and increasing economic opportunity in Colorado. The bill also stipulates that the task force will recommend that the General Assembly adopt the task force's model for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of certain public programs and policies.

Mitigating the Impacts of Poverty

The task force considered perspectives from individuals, employers, county representatives, and other organizations regarding challenges for low-income individuals and ways to mitigate the impacts of poverty by providing work supports and opportunities for economic development. The Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports Subcommittee and the Housing and Utilities Subcommittee further explored the issue.

Several presentations provided information on the impacts of poverty on individuals and on the economy. A presentation from a representative of the Center for Law and Social Policy discussed lessons learned from poverty initiatives in other states, such as the need to develop and prioritize goals to accomplish within a certain time frame. In particular, the representative noted the importance of including a range of opinions and organizations within the work of the task force. The task force also considered a presentation from Mesa County representatives regarding the "Bridges Out of Poverty" initiative, which analyzes disparities in resources available to individuals living in poverty compared to individuals not living in poverty. The initiative considers resources in a variety of categories, including mental, spiritual, financial, and social spheres, and suggests techniques to help individuals with access to such resources understand and assist individuals who may not have similar access. Briefings from representatives of local governments and other experts discussed the impact of poverty on economic development. Public testimony on the challenges and opportunities for individuals living in poverty was also taken into account.

The task force devoted considerable discussion to methods for mitigating barriers to employment for low-income individuals. A representative from the Center for Law and Social Policy suggested that the task force focus on targets with direct impacts on low-income workers, such as the regulation of payday lenders, a guarantee of paid sick leave, and targeted tax policies. Committee members were also briefed by representatives of government agencies, employers, and job-skills training programs regarding best practices for workforce development. Employers shared their experiences offering training opportunities, benefits, and flexible workplace environments to their employees. In addition, the task force heard several presentations concerning ways to lessen the difficulties experienced by ex-offenders upon their release from prison. In particular, the task force considered input from: the Department of Corrections concerning its pre-release and employment training programs for offenders; ex-offenders; representatives of apprenticeship programs; and the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition.

Task force recommendations. As a result of the task force's discussions concerning the use of targeted tax policies to mitigate the impacts of poverty, the task force proposed Bill A, which makes an Earned Income Tax Credit a first priority Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) refund method. In response to testimony regarding the barriers to employment for ex-offenders, the task force recommended Bill B, which clarified civil liability regarding negligent hiring practices for an employer that hires a person with a criminal record. To address concerns about the lack of affordable housing for low-income individuals, the task force proposed Bill G, which authorizes certain public entities to enter into voluntary agreements affecting rent on private residential property.

Improved Access to Benefits and Reduced Service Silos within State Programs

The task force received an overview from select state departments regarding programs that seek to reduce poverty or increase economic opportunity. In its analysis of the programs, the task force sought information on ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs. Members of the task force considered perspectives from individuals with experience accessing the state benefits system, state departments, and representatives from local governments, among others. The Poverty and Education Subcommittee and the Access to and Coordination of Benefits and Nonprofit/Faith-Based Services Subcommittee further explored the issue.

Substantial task force discussion was devoted to the need for programs that simultaneously address poverty reduction and increase economic opportunity. In its deliberations, the task force considered the work of the "Bridges Out of Poverty" initiative in Mesa County, the Colorado Building and Trade Apprenticeship Training Program, county workforce development centers, and the Front Range Economic Strategy Center (FRESC), among other organizations. The committee also considered input from employers with experience hiring low-income individuals as well as testimony from individuals whose economic circumstances had improved in part due to their participation in state programs.

In particular, the task force's analysis of state programs focused on methods of evaluation and proposals to increase efficiency and decrease "service silos" within program administration. Service silos occur when departments with related programs and common goals fail to communicate with each other effectively. Individuals with experience accessing the state benefits system offered testimony on the issue, as did agencies that were responsible for administering various programs.

Testimony from individuals and considerations of the downturn in the economy prompted the task force to examine ways to improve the accessibility of the state benefits system. Significant discussion was devoted to the role of information technology in the delivery of benefits. The task force also discussed the possibility of simplifying the application for benefits recertification process while also minimizing fraud.

In its analysis of state programs, the task force addressed the use of various eligibility guidelines and sought methods to make the benefits system less confusing for applicants. Specifically, the task force searched for ways to make eligibility guidelines easier to understand and less likely to lead to a "cliff effect," in which an increase in income above a certain threshold leads to a loss of benefits. Particular attention was paid to the interplay between state and federal guidelines for benefits programs.

Task force recommendations. As a result of its discussions on the need to make poverty reduction and family self-sufficiency a focus of all programs, the task force recommended Bill H, which allows collaboratives concerned with the provision of multi-agency services to extend membership to additional entities. The task force's focus on ways to improve evaluative measures of state programs led to Bill D, which authorizes the Department of Human Services to use a portion of existing appropriations to conduct an independent evaluation of the Statewide Strategic Use Fund. In response to task force discussions regarding inefficiencies experienced by individuals accessing state benefits, particularly problems experienced by ex-offenders, the task force proposed Bill C. The bill concerns a reduction in barriers to obtaining identity-related documents. In response to presentations concerning the difficulty of navigating eligibility guidelines and the impact of the "cliff effect," which occurs when an increase in earned income leads to a loss of benefits, the task force recommended Bill E. The bill concerns the administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Additional Committee Discussion

The task force considered but declined to recommend legislation directing counties to pursue federal Medicaid matching funds for county mill levy dollars in order to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities. The benefits and disadvantages of such legislation were addressed in testimony from advocates for individuals with developmental disabilities and from representatives of community centered boards. Further task force discussion was devoted to proposed cuts to the Aid for the Needy Disabled Program.

Scope of the Problem in Colorado

During several meetings, both the task force and the Scope of the Problem and Metrics Subcommittee considered the issue of how to most accurately and efficiently measure poverty in Colorado. Numerous poverty metrics have been developed nationally. Legislative Council Staff provided information to the task force on three of the most widely recognized and used measures of poverty: (1) the federal poverty threshold, also known as the "official poverty measure"; (2) the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) poverty measure; and (3) the Self-Sufficiency Standard. Each of these poverty measures differ in how they define and measure poverty. As a result, the population considered "living in poverty" differs depending on the measure employed.

Background

What do the three poverty measures measure? The Self-Sufficiency Standard aims to measure the amount families need to make in wages to be self-sufficient or to "meet their basic necessities *without public or private assistance*."[1] In contrast, both the NAS and official poverty measure aim to measure the number of persons living in poverty. Both the official and NAS measures measure poverty in terms of a poverty "threshold" or "poverty line," under which individuals are unable to meet their basic or minimum needs for survival or participation in society. It is important to note that the official poverty threshold applies to the entire nation with no geographic variation, while the NAS poverty threshold adjusts for geographic variation based on differences in rent across states. Both the NAS and official poverty measures also are used to calculate a poverty *rate*, or the percentage of individuals living in poverty relative to the general population. The poverty rate equation for the NAS and official poverty measures is as follows:

Poverty rate = Individuals whose resources fall below the poverty line / Total population

Differences in definitions of basic needs and family resources. Each of the three measures identify a threshold of basic needs. Each measure also defines the resources (money and "near-money") a family uses for obtaining basic needs. "Near-money" includes non-cash forms of public assistance such as food stamps and low-income energy assistance. Table 1 below summarizes differences in definitions of basic needs and family resources between the measures.

Table 1
Comparing Measures: Definitions of Basic Need and Family Resources

Poverty Measure	Basic Needs Threshold	Resources for Obtaining Basic Needs
Official Poverty Measure	*Poverty threshold (or poverty line)*: Cost of food in 1955 multiplied by three, adjusted by inflation each year	*Money income before taxes*
NAS Poverty Measure	*Poverty threshold (or poverty line)*: Cost of food, clothing, shelter, utilities, medical care costs,* and "a little more" for miscellaneous needs	*Disposable income*: After-tax money income plus specific tax credits, plus near-cash value of assistance programs (such as food stamps), minus work-related expenses (such as child care and transportation)
Self-Sufficiency Standard	*Self-Sufficiency Standard*: Cost of food, housing, transportation, child care, health care, and miscellaneous necessities, taxes and tax credits, and adjustments in cost based on participation in assistance programs	*Self-Sufficiency Wage*: Total family wages

*Medical costs were originally excluded when the measure was developed but have been included in the calculation of the measure in other studies.

[1]Pearce, Diana (2008). "The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2008: A Family Needs Budget." Fiscal Policy Institute, February.

Who is living in poverty? Populations considered to be living in poverty differ based on differences in how poverty is measured. The official poverty measure, NAS measure, and Self-Sufficiency Standard each identify different thresholds for basic needs as well as family resources for obtaining those needs and as a result each also identify different numbers and demographics of people living in poverty. Table 2 summarizes the basic needs thresholds for each measure for Colorado. The NAS poverty threshold was 13.1 percent greater than the official poverty threshold in 2006, the most recent year for which data is available. While the Self-Sufficiency Standard does not have a poverty threshold, it does have a threshold distinguishing those requiring public or private assistance and those who are self-sufficient. The continuum is not calculated statewide, therefore the county ranges for the measure as well as county average is shown for the year 2008. Differences in child care, housing, and tax costs account for the majority of differences between counties.

Table 2
Colorado Basic Needs Thresholds
(Family of Two Adults and Two Children)

Official Poverty Threshold, 2006*	NAS Measure Threshold, 2006**	Self-Sufficiency Standard, 2008***
$20,444	$23,118	Low: $33,689 (Costilla County) High: $71,427 (Pitkin County) 64 County Average: $43,810

* *U.S. Census Bureau.*
** *Legislative Council Staff* calculations.
****Diana Pierce (2008);* Self-Sufficiency Standard for a family with two adults and two "school age" children.

Official Poverty Measure/Federal Poverty Guidelines and Level

Origin and use. The federal or "official" poverty threshold was developed in the early 1960s by statistician Mollie Orshansky as an indicator of the number of people with inadequate income to cover the costs of a minimum food diet and other necessities. Official poverty thresholds are updated each year by the Census Bureau. The thresholds are used mainly for statistical purposes, such as preparing estimates of the number of Americans in poverty each year or the poverty rate.

The federal poverty *guidelines,* commonly referred to as the federal poverty level (FPL), differ slightly from the threshold and are issued each February in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The FPL is a simplification of the poverty threshold and is used to determine financial eligibility for certain federal programs, such as Head Start, National School Lunch Program, and the state Children's Health Insurance Program. Other programs such as the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) use the guidelines for the purpose of giving priority to lower-income persons or families in the provision of assistance or services. The guidelines for the past five years are provided in Table 3.

Table 3
Federal Poverty Guidelines, 2005 - 2009

Year	First Person	Each Additional Person	Four-Person Families
2009	$10,830	$3,740	$22,050
2008	$10,400	$3,600	$21,200
2007	$10,210	$3,480	$20,650
2006	$9,800	$3,400	$20,000
2005	$9,570	$3,260	$19,350

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Calculating the official poverty measure. The official thresholds are based on the share of a household's budget that is spent on food. The share was calculated using data from the 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey. Based on the survey, food spending was calculated as approximately one third of spending on necessities. Therefore, the poverty threshold was set at the cost of food multiplied by three. Each year the threshold is grown by inflation as measured by the national consumer price index for all urban areas (CPI-U). The following equations summarize the threshold for the official poverty measure:

Original threshold = 3 × Cost of food prepared at home based on a 1955 survey

Official poverty threshold = Original threshold increased annually by inflation

Original thresholds were calculated for individuals and families differently based on the number of members in a family and age of individuals. Thresholds differ for children, adults, and the elderly. All states within the contiguous United States have the same poverty threshold each year. Changes in the standard of living are not accounted for in the measure. Instead, the measure is reflective of living standards from the 1950s and 1960s. Therefore, inflation adjustments account for the change in cost of the standard of living from this time period. Government assistance programs such as food stamps and housing assistance are not included in the calculation of the official poverty measure. When a person's or family's resources as measured by their money income is less than the threshold, they are considered to be living in poverty. According to the Census Bureau, the poverty rate for individuals and families in the state of Colorado is 11.8 and 8.3 percent, respectively, compared to national rates of 13.3 and 9.8 percent.[2]

National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Poverty Measure

Origins and use. At the request of Congress, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS)[3] created the Panel on Poverty and Family Assistance in 1992 to conduct a comprehensive examination of poverty measurement in the United States. The panel published their findings in

[2]U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey three-year estimates (2005 to 2007).

[3]The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) is a private, non-profit corporation composed of distinguished scholars who engage in scientific research at the request of Congress.

a 1995 report titled "Measuring Poverty: A New Approach." The report recommends the revision of the official poverty measure to reflect the circumstances (basic needs and family resources) of families over time and outlines a method for calculating the measure.

Since the report was published in 1995, the recommendations of the report have not been adopted nationwide, though legislation has been introduced to do so.[4] Research continues on the use of the measure, conducted primarily by the U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics. Additionally, in 2006, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg convened a commission to study poverty measurement in New York City. Finding inadequacies in the official poverty measure, Mayor Bloomberg created the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity which adopted and calculates a poverty measure based on the NAS methodology.

Calculating the NAS measure. The public and scientific community continue to shape how the NAS measure is calculated. Based on recent publications and the 1995 NAS report, the NAS threshold is first calculated for a reference family of four (two adults, two children) then later adjusted for differences in family type (number of adults and children). Basic needs for the reference family are calculated as the percentage of national median expenditures on food, clothing, shelter, utilities, and a "little more" for miscellaneous necessities. Medical costs were excluded from the original 1995 report but have since been included in the calculation in other studies.[5] Regional differences are adjusted for based on differences in housing rental costs. The NAS panel recommended that the measure be calculated annually to account for changes in consumer prices and living standards.

Family resources are defined as after-tax money income and near-money income from assistance programs including food stamps and housing assistance. Additionally, specific tax credits are added to income, and work-related expenses, including transportation and child care costs, are subtracted. If family resources are less than the basic needs threshold, a family is considered to be living in poverty.

While no formal NAS measure has been calculated for Colorado, Legislative Council Staff (LCS) calculated estimates of the NAS threshold for the year 2006 using the NAS methodology. These estimates are summarized in Table 4, comparing the LCS estimates for Colorado to the threshold for the United States. The Colorado threshold is 6 percent larger than the nationwide threshold, reflecting higher rental prices in Colorado than the nationwide average. Due to data limitations, an estimate of the Colorado poverty rate using the NAS measure cannot be calculated at this time.

[4]The federal Measuring American Poverty Act of 2008 and 2009 proposes a "Modern Poverty Measure" that largely follows the NAS methodology.

[5]Garner and Short (2008). "Creating a Consistent Poverty Measure over Time Using NAS Procedures: 1996-2005." U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Working Paper No. 417, April.

Table 4
NAS Poverty Measure Threshold for Colorado and the United States, 2006
(Family of Two Adults and Two Children)

	Colorado	United States
Shelter and Utilities	$10,900	$9,600
Non-Shelter Necessities	$12,218	$12,218
Poverty Threshold	$23,118	$21,818

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Legislative Council Staff calculations.

The Self-Sufficiency Standard

Origins and use. The Self-Sufficiency Standard defines the income families require to meet their basic necessities without public or private assistance. The standard was first developed by Dr. Diana Pearce for Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) in response to the perceived inadequacies of the official poverty level in 1996. Dr. Pearce continues to calculate the standard for numerous states each year. The standard was calculated for Colorado for the Fiscal Policy Institute in 2001, 2004, and 2008.

Calculating the Self-sufficiency Standard. The standard is calculated for 70 different family types in each of Colorado's 64 counties. Family types differ based on the number of adults, number of children, and age of children in a family. Based on the family type, monthly costs of basic necessities are calculated by category (e.g., food, housing, transportation) based on available data and are adjusted based on regional costs and benefits from assistance programs such as food stamps and federally assisted housing. Taxes and specific tax credits are also included in the standard. The total of all costs for each category is equal to the "Self-Sufficiency Wage," and represents the total household wage necessary for a family to be self-sufficient. Table 5 below provides the 2008 Self-Sufficiency Standard for two family types in Larimer County.

Table 5
2008 Self-Sufficiency Standard for Selected Family Types: Larimer County

	One Adult, One Preschooler		Two Adults, One Preschooler, One School-aged Child	
Monthly Costs	Costs	% of Total Costs	Costs	% of Total Costs
Housing	$807	26%	$807	19%
Child Care	$727	23%	$1,114	26%
Food	$341	11%	$703	16%
Transportation	$249	8%	$478	11%
Health Care	$324	10%	$408	9%
Miscellaneous	$245	8%	$351	8%
Taxes	$593	19%	$752	17%

Table 5
2008 Self-Sufficiency Standard for Selected Family Types: Larimer County (Cont.)

	One Adult, One Preschooler		Two Adults, One Preschooler, One School-aged Child	
Monthly Costs	Costs	% of Total Costs	Costs	% of Total Costs
Earned Income Tax Credit	$0	0%	$0	0%
Child Care Tax Credit	($58)	-2%	($100)	-2%
Child Tax Credit	($83)	-3%	($167)	-4%
Self-Sufficiency Wage				
Hourly	$17.87		$12.35 (per adult)*	
Monthly	$3,146		$4,347	
Annual	$37,752		$52,161	

*Hourly wages for families with multiple adults represent the hourly wage that each adult would need to earn, while the monthly and annual wages represent all adults' wages combined.
Source: Pearce (2008).

Assessment of Current Policies and Procedures that Address Poverty

In order to assess current policies and procedures that address poverty, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force requested that Legislative Council Staff survey all executive departments to assess programs that alleviate poverty or provide economic opportunities to low-income Coloradans. The survey results were compiled into a memorandum that provides information on programs in the areas of health, housing and utilities, food assistance, child care, employment, education, and other services. The memorandum is available on the task force's website at the following address:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/PovertyReductionTaskForce

Programs Not Addressed

It is important to note that the memorandum focuses primarily on programs that are funded and administered by the state, or funded by the federal government and administered by the state. The memorandum does not address services that are entirely administered by the federal government, such as Medicare, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). The memorandum also does not address services that are provided primarily by local governments or entities, such as specific requirements for housing assistance provided by local housing authorities. Finally, the memorandum does not address the services that are available through nonprofit organizations, charities, religious organizations, or other private entities, unless such services are funded through the state's budget.

Process of Compiling the Information

To compile the information in the memorandum, Legislative Council Staff contacted each executive department to assess whether it administers programs that seek to alleviate poverty or create economic opportunities for low-income Coloradans. For each identified program, the agency was asked to fill out a survey detailing the program's function, eligibility criteria, budget, client population, and other pertinent information. For situations in which a program that appeared to be relevant was not reported by an agency, Legislative Council Staff compiled information on these programs for inclusion in the memorandum. A compilation of survey responses, organized by state agency, can be found on the task force website at the following address:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/PovertyReductionTaskForce

Final Product

For each program, the memorandum provides information on the program's enrollment and budget, when that information is available. In all cases, attempts were made to provide the most recent data, although available data varies by program. The memorandum contains a narrative explanation of each program and two tables that summarize the information contained in the narrative portion of the document.

- Table 1 shows the various programs available by population served.
- Table 2 provides a summary of the available programs, including the population served, eligibility level, department or agency that administers the program, enrollment, and appropriated budget for FY 2009-10.

The memorandum and supporting documents were presented to the task force at its August 18, 2009, meeting.

Department Testimony

Following the presentation of the memorandum, representatives from select executive departments attended task force meetings to answer questions and to provide further detail on programs that address poverty or increase economic opportunity.

Task Force Advisory Group

The implementing legislation for the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force, House Bill 09-1064, allows the task force to accept staff support from public and private entities, in addition to staff support from Legislative Council Staff and the Office of Legislative Legal Services. In order to assist with the work of the task force, a group of representatives from interested parties and organizations formed a task force advisory group. This informal group met several times during the months leading up to the initial convening of the task force in order to create a plan for the task force's activities. The group provided assistance in setting the task force's agenda and establishing a framework for the subcommittees. In addition, the members of the advisory group organized and staffed subcommittee meetings and summarized subcommittee recommendations regarding the development of the task force's strategic plan to reduce poverty and increase economic opportunity. Members of the task force advisory group also outlined subcommittee input regarding the issues to be addressed by the task force in future years, and on proposed time frames to address such issues. Members of the advisory group were instrumental in drafting a report that frames the issues of poverty and economic opportunity, conveys the findings and recommendations of the five subcommittees, and identifies issues to be addressed by the task force in future years. That report can be found on the task force website at the following address:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/PovertyReductionTaskForce

Among other activities, the task force advisory group:

- assisted with the development of the executive department survey regarding programs that address poverty reduction and economic opportunity;
- surveyed Colorado counties to compile best practices concerning poverty reduction;
- raised money to support the activities of the task force;
- assisted with the compilation of information regarding potential American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding for programs that reduce poverty or increase economic opportunity;
- assisted with setting task force meeting agendas;
- assisted with the coordination of presenters before the task force;
- solicited public input for task force meetings;
- completed a review of available information concerning Colorado nonprofits and faith-based services; and
- participated in outreach efforts related to subcommittee activities.

Summary of Recommendations

As a result of task force deliberations, Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force recommends eight bills for consideration during the 2010 legislative session.

Bill A — TABOR and the Earned Income Tax Credit

Bill A makes an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) a first priority TABOR refund method. The bill increases the threshold necessary to trigger a temporary income tax rate reduction as a method to provide a TABOR refund so that the rate reduction does not occur unless there is also an EITC refund.

Bill B — Clarifying Civil Liability for an Employer Hiring a Person with a Criminal Record

Bill B prohibits information regarding an employee's criminal history from being introduced as evidence against an employer in a civil action regarding negligent hiring practices if:

- the nature of the criminal history does not bear a direct relationship to the facts underlying the cause of action;
- a court order sealed any record of a criminal case or a pardon was issued before the occurrence of the civil action; or
- the record of an arrest or charge did not result in a criminal conviction.

Bill B does not eliminate the requirement for criminal history background checks in hiring for certain employment.

Bill C — Reduction in Barriers to Obtaining Identity-Related Documents

Bill C prohibits the state from charging a fee for a certified birth or death record if the applicant is a county department of social services or human services or the applicant has a letter of referral from such a county department. Bill C also prohibits the state from charging a fee for a Colorado identification card to an applicant referred by, or released within the prior six months from, the Department of Corrections, the Division of Youth Corrections, or a county jail. Bill C authorizes a court to grant a name change if a person has previously been convicted of a felony when specified conditions are found by the court. The bill directs the court to forward information on the name change to specified departments.

Bill D — Independent Evaluation of the Statewide Strategic Use Fund

Bill D authorizes the Department of Human Services to use a portion of existing appropriations to conduct an independent evaluation of the Statewide Strategic Use Fund (SSUF). Money accrues to the SSUF from federal block grants and state appropriations and allocations are made from the fund to state departments, local governments, and nonprofit organizations to support programs seeking to mitigate the effects of poverty. Pursuant to the bill, the executive director of the Department of Human Services, after consultation with the Strategic Allocation

Committee, is authorized to contract with a qualified, independent entity to perform an evidence-based evaluation of the effectiveness of the SSUF in meeting the objectives of the Colorado Works Program, as well as the effectiveness of the individual initiatives and programs supported by the SSUF. Bill D allows the executive director to annually use up to 2 percent of the moneys allocated to the SSUF to contract for the evaluation. The bill requires the executive director to include a copy of the most recent evaluation in his or her annual report to the General Assembly on the SSUF.

Bill E — Administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Bill E requires the state Department of Human Services to adopt the maximum certification period allowable pursuant to federal law for the receipt of federal food assistance benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Additionally, Bill E requires the department to develop and implement a state outreach plan with the use of private and federal moneys to promote access to federal food benefits by eligible persons. The bill requires the department to submit the outreach plan for federal approval by September 1, 2010. The bill exempts the department from developing and implementing the outreach plan if sufficient federal or private moneys are not received. Bill E changes the name of the federal food stamps program to SNAP to reflect the federal name change. The bill also directs the department to implement a program or policy, pursuant to federal law, establishing broad-based categorical eligibility for federal food assistance benefits. At a minimum, the program or policy must remove the asset test for eligibility and increase the gross income test to 200 percent of the federal poverty level pursuant to federal law.

Bill F — Duties of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force

Bill F specifies that the duties of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force include developing a relevant, fluid model for assessing progress toward reducing poverty and increasing economic opportunity in Colorado. Once a model is developed, the task force will recommend that the General Assembly adopt the task force's model for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of certain public programs and policies in achieving the goals of the task force.

Bill G — Authorization for Public Entities to Enter Voluntary Agreements Affecting Rent

The rent control statute in current law prohibits counties and municipalities from enacting any ordinance or resolution that would control rent on private residential property. Bill G clarifies that the rent control statute applies only to private residential housing units. The bill also clarifies that nothing in the rent control statute prohibits or restricts the right of a property owner and public entity from voluntarily entering into and enforcing an agreement that controls rent on a private residential housing unit, whether the agreement is entered into before, on, or after the effective date of the bill. An agreement authorized pursuant to Bill G may specify how long a unit is subject to its terms, whether or not the subsequent property owners are subject to the agreement, and remedies for early termination agreed to by both parties. Finally, the bill specifies that the rent control statute does not preclude public entities from cooperatively entering into an agreement, nor does it preclude the assignment of rights and remedies to any party to the agreement.

Bill H — Collaboration in the Provision of Multi-Agency Services

Currently, county departments of social services may enter into memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with certain agencies. The MOUs are designed to promote a collaborative system of local-level interagency oversight groups and individualized services and support teams to coordinate and manage the provision of services to children and families who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services. Currently, the following entities may be included in an MOU:

- local judicial districts;
- a county, district, or regional health department;
- a local school district or school districts;
- community mental health centers;
- behavioral health organizations;
- the division of youth corrections;
- a designated managed service organization for the provision of treatment services for alcohol and drug abuse; and
- a domestic abuse program.

Bill H includes a listing of additional agencies or entities that may also be included in an MOU. The additional agencies or entities that may be included are:

- community colleges and postsecondary career and technical education colleges or programs;
- early childhood councils;
- boards of cooperative services;
- regional service councils;
- family resource centers; and
- workforce centers.

Bill H clarifies that if any of these additional agencies or entities are included in the MOU, that agency or entity has the same rights and responsibilities as any other participant in the MOU.

Resource Materials

Meeting summaries are prepared for each meeting of the commission and contain all handouts provided to the commission. The summaries of meetings and attachments are available at the Division of Archives, 1313 Sherman Street, Denver (303-866-4900). The listing below contains the dates of task force meetings and the subject matter considered at those meetings. Meeting summaries are also available on our website at:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/PovertyReductionTaskForce

Meeting Date and Subject Matter Considered

July 27, 2009

- Overview of the duties and responsibilities of the task force
- Lessons from poverty initiatives in other states
- "Paycheck Away Project" video presentation
- Understanding poverty
- Poverty in Colorado: definitions, metrics, and data
- Poverty and economic development
- Impact of poverty in Colorado
- Presentation of task force subcommittee topics, directives, and chairs

August 18, 2009

- Legislative Council Staff overview of department survey results
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Health Care Policy and Financing
- Department of Public Health and Environment
- Department of Higher Education
- Department of Education, K-12 education
- Department of Labor and Employment
- Public testimony: personal stories

September 8, 2009

- Subcommittee updates
- Realities of low-income working families
- Public testimony: personal stories
- Discussion concerning the role of county commissioners
- Workforce development and employer best practices

September 22, 2009

- Office of Economic Development and International Trade
- Department of Corrections
- Colorado Community and Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Department of Local Affairs
- Department of Revenue
- Discussion concerning the legislative proposals of the task force

October 13, 2009

- American Community Survey poverty data
- Invest in Kids and the Nurse Home Visitor Programs
- Discussion of bill drafts and proposed amendments

October 20, 2009

- Final action on task force bills and amendments
- Subcommittee presentations on preliminary findings and conclusions

Second Regular Session
Sixty-seventh General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

BILL A

LLS NO. 10-0233.01 Ed DeCecco **HOUSE BILL**

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Kefalas, Gagliardi, Kagan

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Sandoval, Boyd, Hudak

House Committees **Senate Committees**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING AN INCREASE IN THE THRESHOLD NECESSARY TO TRIGGER A TEMPORARY INCOME TAX RATE REDUCTION AS A METHOD TO REFUND EXCESS STATE REVENUES BY AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE THRESHOLD NECESSARY TO TRIGGER THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT REFUND.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. The bill increases the threshold necessary to trigger a temporary income tax rate reduction as a method to provide a constitutionally required refund of excess state revenues so that the rate reduction does not occur unless there is also an earned income tax credit refund.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. 39-22-627 (1) (b), (3), and (6), Colorado Revised Statutes, are amended to read:

39-22-627. Temporary adjustment of rate of income tax - refund of excess state revenues - authority of executive director. (1) (b) In order for the provisions of paragraph (a) of this subsection (1) to take effect, the amount of state revenues required to be refunded for the specified state fiscal year shall exceed the TOTAL OF THE ADJUSTED AMOUNT SET FORTH IN SECTION 39-22-123 (4) (c), PLUS THE estimated amount by which state revenues would be decreased as the result of a reduction in the state income tax rate from four and sixty-three one-hundredths percent to four and one-half percent of federal taxable income, as determined pursuant to this section.

(3) If one or more ballot questions are submitted to the voters at a statewide election to be held in November of any given calendar year that seek authorization for the state to retain and spend all or any portion of the amount of excess state revenues for the state fiscal year ending during said calendar year, the executive director shall not reduce the state income tax rate until the results of said election are known so that the state income tax rate may be reduced only if, after the results of said election, the amount of excess state revenues required to be refunded for the state fiscal year exceeds the TOTAL OF THE ADJUSTED AMOUNT SET FORTH IN SECTION 39-22-123 (4) (c), PLUS THE estimated amount by which state revenues would be decreased as a result of a reduction in the state income tax rate from four and sixty-three one-hundredths percent to four

and one-half percent of federal taxable income pursuant to this section.

(6) If, based on the financial report prepared by the controller in accordance with section 24-77-106.5, C.R.S., the controller certifies that the amount of the state revenues for any state fiscal year commencing on or after July 1, 2010, exceeds the limitation on state fiscal year spending imposed by section 20 (7) (a) of article X of the state constitution for that state fiscal year and exceeds the amount of excess state revenues that the voters statewide have authorized the state to retain and spend for that state fiscal year by less than the TOTAL OF THE ADJUSTED AMOUNT SET FORTH IN SECTION 39-22-123 (4) (c), PLUS THE estimated amount by which state revenues would be decreased as the result of a reduction in the state income tax rate from four and sixty-three one-hundredths percent to four and one-half percent of federal taxable income as calculated by the executive director pursuant to subsection (2) of this section, then the reduction in the state income tax rate allowed pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall not be allowed for the income tax year commencing during the calendar year in which the state fiscal year ended.

SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act shall take effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 11, 2010, if adjournment sine die is on May 12, 2010); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part shall not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2010 and shall take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

Second Regular Session
Sixty-seventh General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

BILL B

LLS NO. 10-0238.02 Jane Ritter **HOUSE BILL**

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Waller, Gagliardi, Kagan, Kefalas, Summers

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Hudak, Boyd, Sandoval, Scheffel, White

House Committees **Senate Committees**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING CLARIFYING CIVIL LIABILITY REGARDING NEGLIGENT HIRING PRACTICES FOR AN EMPLOYER THAT HIRES A PERSON WITH A CRIMINAL RECORD.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. The bill prohibits information regarding an employee's criminal history from being introduced as evidence in a civil action against an employer if:

- The nature of the criminal history does not bear a direct relationship to the facts underlying the cause of action;
- A court order sealed any record of a criminal case or a

pardon was issued before the occurrence of the civil action; or

- The record of an arrest or charge did not result in a criminal conviction.

The bill does not eliminate the requirement for criminal history background checks in hiring for certain employment.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The General Assembly hereby finds that:

(a) Employers may be reluctant, in part, to hire employees with a criminal record due to a lack of clarity regarding the employer's risk of liability for such hire;

(b) Since there is a direct correlation between employment and reduced recidivism, it is in the public interest to clarify employer liability for employers who hire persons with a criminal conviction.

(2) Therefore, it is necessary and appropriate for the General Assembly to reduce unnecessary barriers to employment for persons with a criminal conviction and thereby promote economic opportunity, poverty reduction, and public safety in the state of Colorado.

SECTION 2. 8-2-201, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

8-2-201. Damages - fellow servant rule and abolition thereof - limitation on admission of criminal history. (1) Every corporation or individual who employs agents, servants, or employees, such agents, servants, or employees being in the exercise of due care, shall be liable to respond in damages for injuries or death sustained by any such agent, servant, or employee resulting from the carelessness, omission of duty, or negligence of such employer, or which may have resulted from the carelessness, omission of duty, or negligence of any other agent, servant, or employee of the employer, in the same manner and to the same extent as if the carelessness, omission of duty, or negligence causing the injury or death was that of the employer.

(2) (a) INFORMATION REGARDING THE CRIMINAL HISTORY OF AN EMPLOYEE OR FORMER EMPLOYEE MAY NOT BE INTRODUCED AS EVIDENCE IN A CIVIL ACTION AGAINST AN EMPLOYER OR ITS EMPLOYEES OR AGENTS THAT IS BASED ON THE CONDUCT OF THE EMPLOYEE OR FORMER EMPLOYEE IF:

(I) THE NATURE OF THE CRIMINAL HISTORY DOES NOT BEAR A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP TO THE FACTS UNDERLYING THE CAUSE OF ACTION; OR

(II) BEFORE THE OCCURRENCE OF THE ACT GIVING RISE TO THE CIVIL ACTION, A COURT ORDER SEALED ANY RECORD OF THE CRIMINAL CASE OR THE EMPLOYEE OR FORMER EMPLOYEE RECEIVED A PARDON; OR

(III) THE RECORD IS OF AN ARREST OR CHARGE THAT DID NOT RESULT IN A CRIMINAL CONVICTION.

(b) THIS SUBSECTION (2) DOES NOT SUPERSEDE ANY STATUTORY REQUIREMENT TO CONDUCT A CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION OR CONSIDER CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORDS IN HIRING FOR PARTICULAR TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT.

SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act shall take effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 11, 2010, if adjournment sine die is on May 12, 2010); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part shall not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2010 and shall take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

Second Regular Session
Sixty-seventh General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

BILL C

LLS NO. 10-0239.01 Jerry Barry **SENATE BILL**

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Boyd, Hudak, Sandoval, White

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Summers, Gagliardi, Kefalas, Waller

Senate Committees **House Committees**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING REDUCTIONS IN BARRIERS TO OBTAINING IDENTITY-RELATED DOCUMENTS.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. Section 1. This bill contains a legislative declaration.

Section 2. Prohibits the state from charging a fee for a certified birth or death record if the applicant is a county department of social services or human services or the applicant has a letter of referral from such a county department.

Section 3. Prohibits the state from charging a fee for a Colorado

identification card to an applicant referred by, or released within the prior 6 months from, the department of corrections, the division of youth corrections, or a county jail.

Section 4. Authorizes a court to grant a name change if a person has previously been convicted of a felony if specified conditions are found by the court. Directs the court to forward information on the name change to specified departments.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly hereby finds that:

(a) It is in the public interest to eliminate or reduce barriers to individuals who need primary identification documents in order to achieve self-sufficiency and financial security;

(b) In many instances, citizens and legal residents need both a certified birth certificate and a valid state identification card to access public benefits, secure affordable housing, obtain employment, register for school, and receive health care;

(c) The cost of obtaining these documents may present a substantial barrier to indigent and low-income persons and their children;

(d) Because the lack of valid identification is an impediment to successful re-entry and employment, which, as research shows, is linked to lower recidivism, the fee to obtain such identification should be waived for adult and juvenile offenders who cannot afford these documents upon release from custody; and

(e) Individuals with a criminal conviction face barriers because:

(I) Eligibility for a state identification card requires an exact match between the name on the birth certificate and other documents;

(II) While other individuals may petition the court for a name change to resolve any discrepancy, persons convicted of a felony and certain juvenile offenders are currently barred from legally changing their names.

(2) Therefore, the general assembly finds that it is necessary and appropriate to:

(a) Eliminate or reduce barriers to obtaining identity-related documents to promote economic opportunity and reduce poverty in the state; and

(b) Give a court discretion to authorize a change of name for persons convicted or adjudicated of certain crimes if the court is satisfied that the change of name is appropriate.

SECTION 2. 25-2-117 (2) (a), Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

25-2-117. Certified copies furnished - fee. (2) An applicant shall pay fees established pursuant to section 25-2-121 for each of the following services:

(a) The reproduction and certification of birth or death records; ~~however;~~ EXCEPT THAT an applicant shall NOT pay ~~no~~ A fee:

(I) For the provision of a certified copy of such a record to:

(A) Another state agency;

(B) A COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES OR HUMAN SERVICES; OR

(C) AN INDIVIDUAL PRESENTING A LETTER OF REFERRAL FROM A COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES; OR

(II) ~~and shall pay no fee~~ If the applicant is a delegate child support enforcement unit acting pursuant to article 13 of title 26, C.R.S.;

SECTION 3. 42-2-306 (1) (a) (II), Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended, and the said 42-2-306 (1) (a) is further amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBPARAGRAPH, to read:

42-2-306. Fees - disposition - repeal. (1) The department shall charge and collect the following fees:

(a) (II) Except as provided in ~~subparagraph~~ SUBPARAGRAPHS (III) AND (III.5) of this paragraph (a), a fee of nine dollars and ninety cents at the time of application for an identification card or renewal of an identification card. ~~except that, for applicants sixty years of age or older and applicants referred by any county department of social services pursuant to section 26-2-106 (3) or 25.5-4-205 (3), C.R.S., there shall be no fee.~~

(III.5) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL NOT CHARGE A FEE TO AN APPLICANT WHO IS:

(A) SIXTY YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER;

(B) REFERRED BY A COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES PURSUANT TO SECTION 25.5-4-205 (3) OR 26-2-106 (3), C.R.S.; OR

(C) REFERRED BY OR RELEASED WITHIN THE PRIOR SIX MONTHS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, THE DIVISION OF YOUTH CORRECTIONS, OR A COUNTY JAIL.

SECTION 4. 13-15-101 (2) (b), Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

13-15-101. Petition - proceedings. (2) (b) (I) ~~The court shall not grant a petition for a name change~~ If ~~the court finds~~ the petitioner was previously convicted of a felony IN THIS STATE OR ANY OTHER STATE or adjudicated a juvenile delinquent for an offense that would constitute a felony if committed by an adult in this state or any other state or under federal law, THE COURT MAY ONLY GRANT THE PETITION FOR A NAME CHANGE IF:

(A) THE COURT FINDS THE NAME CHANGE IS NOT FOR THE PURPOSE OF FRAUD, TO AVOID THE CONSEQUENCES OF A CRIMINAL CONVICTION, OR

TO FACILITATE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY; AND

(B) THE COURT IS SATISFIED THAT THE DESIRED NAME CHANGE WOULD BE PROPER AND NOT DETRIMENTAL TO THE INTERESTS OF ANY OTHER PERSON.

(II) IF THE COURT GRANTS A PETITION FOR A NAME CHANGE PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH (b):

(A) THE COURT SHALL TRANSMIT THE NAME CHANGE INFORMATION, INCLUDING THE FORMER NAME, THE NEW LEGAL NAME, AND ALL KNOWN ALIASES, TO THE COLORADO BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, AND THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY; AND

(B) IF THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE HAS A RECORD OF ANY VICTIM OF THE PETITIONER'S CRIME, THE DIVISION SHALL SEND NOTICE OF THE NAME CHANGE TO THE VICTIM.

(III) If the certified, fingerprint-based criminal history check filed with the petition reflects a criminal charge for which there is no disposition shown, the court may grant the name change after affirmation in open court by the petitioner, or submission of a signed affidavit by the petitioner, stating he or she has not been convicted of a felony in this state or any other state or under federal law.

SECTION 5. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Second Regular Session
Sixty-seventh General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

BILL D

LLS NO. 10-0234.01 Brita Darling **SENATE BILL**

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Boyd, Sandoval

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Kefalas,

Senate Committees **House Committees**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES TO USE A PORTION OF EXISTING APPROPRIATIONS TO CONDUCT AN INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE STATEWIDE STRATEGIC USE FUND.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. This bill authorizes the executive director of the department of human services, after consultation with the strategic allocation committee, to contract with a qualified, independent entity to perform an evidence-based evaluation

of the effectiveness of the statewide strategic use fund (SSUF) in meeting the objectives of the Colorado works program, as well as the effectiveness of the individual initiatives and programs supported by the SSUF. The executive director may annually use up to 2% of the moneys annually allocated to the SSUF to contract for the evaluation.

The executive director shall include a copy of the most recent evaluation in his or her annual report to the general assembly on the SSUF.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. 26-2-721.7 (1), Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW PARAGRAPH to read:

26-2-721.7. Colorado works statewide strategic use fund - created - allocations - rules - evaluation - report. (1) (c) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MAY ANNUALLY USE UP TO TWO PERCENT OF THE MONEYS ANNUALLY APPROPRIATED FROM THE STATEWIDE STRATEGIC USE FUND TO CONTRACT, PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (6.5) OF THIS SECTION, WITH A QUALIFIED, INDEPENDENT ENTITY FOR AN EVALUATION OF THE STATEWIDE STRATEGIC USE FUND.

SECTION 2. 26-2-721.7 (7), Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended, and the said 26-2-721.7 is further amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SUBSECTION, to read:

26-2-721.7. Colorado works statewide strategic use fund - created - allocations - rules - evaluation - report. (6.5) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MAY CONTRACT WITH A QUALIFIED, INDEPENDENT ENTITY FOR AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STATEWIDE STRATEGIC USE FUND IN MEETING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COLORADO WORKS PROGRAM AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS SUPPORTED BY THE STATEWIDE STRATEGIC USE FUND IN ATTAINING THE GOALS SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION AS

WELL AS ANY OUTCOMES DEFINED BY THE STRATEGIC ALLOCATION COMMITTEE. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL CONSULT WITH THE STRATEGIC ALLOCATION COMMITTEE BEFORE AWARDING THE EVALUATION CONTRACT. THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL SELECT AN ENTITY THAT IS QUALIFIED TO PERFORM AN EVIDENCE-BASED EVALUATION OF A SOCIAL PROGRAM, AND THE ENTITY AWARDED THE EVALUATION CONTRACT SHALL NOT HAVE A CONFLICT OF INTEREST WITH RESPECT TO THE ENTITIES OR ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE BENEFITTED FROM, OR MAY BENEFIT FROM, ALLOCATIONS FROM THE STATEWIDE STRATEGIC USE FUND.

(7) On or before February 15, 2009, and on or before February 15 each year thereafter, the executive director shall submit to the joint budget committee and to the health and human services committees of the senate and the house of representatives, or any successor committees, a report concerning the programs and initiatives that received allocations from the statewide strategic use fund in the preceding fiscal year, AND A COPY OF THE MOST RECENT EVALUATION COMPLETED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (6.5) OF THIS SECTION.

SECTION 3. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Second Regular Session
Sixty-seventh General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

BILL E

LLS NO. 10-0235.01 Brita Darling **HOUSE BILL**

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Summers and Gagliardi, Kagan, Kefalas

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Boyd, Hudak

House Committees **Senate Committees**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. Section 1: This bill requires the state department of human services (department) to adopt the maximum certification period allowable pursuant to federal law for the receipt of federal food assistance benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

Additionally, this bill requires the department to develop and implement a state outreach plan with the use of private and federal

moneys to promote access to federal food benefits by eligible persons. The department may partner or contract with one or more nonprofit organizations to develop and implement the outreach plan and is authorized to seek and accept gifts, grants, and donations for the purposes of developing and implementing the state outreach plan. The bill requires the department to submit the outreach plan for federal approval by September 1, 2010, and to request any matching federal moneys that may be available upon approval of the outreach plan. In the event that the department will not be receiving sufficient federal or private moneys to develop and implement the outreach plan, the department is exempted from developing and implementing an outreach plan.

The bill also includes amendments changing the name of the federal food stamps program to the supplemental nutrition assistance program to reflect the federal name change.

Section 2: This bill directs the department to implement a program or policy, pursuant to federal law, establishing broad-based categorical eligibility for federal food assistance benefits. At a minimum, the program or policy shall remove the asset test for eligibility and increase the gross income test to 200% of federal poverty level pursuant to federal law.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. 26-2-301, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

26-2-301. Supplemental nutrition assistance program - administration. (1) The state department is hereby designated as the single state agency to administer or supervise the administration of the ~~food stamp~~ SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE program in this state in cooperation with the federal government pursuant to the federal "Food ~~Stamp~~ AND NUTRITION Act OF 2008", as amended, and this part 3.

(2) The state department, with the approval of the state board, may enter into an agreement with the secretary of the United States department of agriculture to accept federal food ~~coupons~~ ASSISTANCE BENEFITS for disbursement to qualified households in accordance with federal law. Under state department supervision, the responsibility for disbursement

may be delegated, under agreement, to county departments, United States postal service facilities, or other commercial facilities such as but not limited to banks.

(3) The ~~food stamp~~ SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE program shall be implemented and administered in every county in the state by the respective county departments or by the state department pursuant to an agreement with one or more counties. If a county can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the state department that it is impossible or impractical for the county department to administer the program, the state department shall ensure that the program is implemented and administered within such county, and the county shall continue to meet the requirements of section 26-1-122.

(4) IN IMPLEMENTING THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT A CERTIFICATION PERIOD THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE MAXIMUM CERTIFICATION PERIOD ALLOWABLE UNDER FEDERAL LAW.

(5) (a) THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP A STATE OUTREACH PLAN, REFERRED TO IN THIS SECTION AS THE "OUTREACH PLAN", TO PROMOTE ACCESS BY ELIGIBLE PERSONS TO BENEFITS THROUGH THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. THE OUTREACH PLAN SHALL MEET THE CRITERIA ESTABLISHED BY THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES AGENCY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR APPROVAL OF STATE OUTREACH PLANS. THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS AUTHORIZED TO SEEK AND ACCEPT GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THE OUTREACH PLAN.

(b) FOR PURPOSES OF DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING AN OUTREACH PLAN, THE STATE DEPARTMENT MAY PARTNER WITH ONE OR MORE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS OR MAY CONTRACT WITH ONE OR MORE

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTREACH PLAN. IF THE STATE DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS WITH ONE OR MORE ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT THE OUTREACH PLAN, THE CONTRACT MAY SPECIFY THAT THE ORGANIZATION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SEEKING SUFFICIENT GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTREACH PLAN, AND MAY ADDITIONALLY SPECIFY THAT ANY COSTS TO THE STATE ASSOCIATED WITH THE AWARD AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CONTRACT OR THE IMPLEMENTATION OR ADMINISTRATION OF THE OUTREACH PLAN SHALL BE PAID OUT OF ANY PRIVATE OR FEDERAL MONEYS RAISED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTREACH PLAN. THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL SUBMIT THE OUTREACH PLAN TO THE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES AGENCY FOR APPROVAL BY SEPTEMBER 1, 2010, AND SHALL REQUEST ANY FEDERAL MATCHING MONEYS THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE UPON APPROVAL OF THE OUTREACH PLAN.

(c) NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF PARAGRAPHS (a) OR (b) OF THIS SUBSECTION (5), THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, OR ADMINISTERING AN OUTREACH PLAN IF THE STATE DEPARTMENT WILL NOT BE RECEIVING PRIVATE OR FEDERAL MONEYS SUFFICIENT TO COVER THE STATE'S COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, OR ADMINISTRATION OF THE OUTREACH PLAN.

~~(4)~~ (6) The provisions of article 1 of this title and, where not inconsistent with this part 3, the provisions of part 1 of this article shall apply to FEDERAL food ~~stamps~~ ASSISTANCE BENEFITS under this part 3.

SECTION 2. Part 3 of article 2 of title 26, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to read:

26-2-305.5. Categorical eligibility. (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES, "FEDERAL LAW" MEANS THE FEDERAL "FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008", AND ANY AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT AND ANY FEDERAL REGULATIONS ADOPTED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACT.

(2) (a) NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 2010, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL CREATE A PROGRAM OR POLICY THAT, IN COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAW, ESTABLISHES BROAD-BASED CATEGORICAL ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE BENEFITS PURSUANT TO THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(b) AT A MINIMUM, THE PROGRAM OR POLICY SHALL, TO THE EXTENT AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO FEDERAL LAW:

(I) ELIMINATE THE ASSET TEST FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE BENEFITS; AND

(II) INCREASE THE GROSS INCOME TEST TO TWO HUNDRED PERCENT OF FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL, OR GREATER AS PROVIDED PURSUANT TO FEDERAL LAW, FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE BENEFITS.

SECTION 3. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Second Regular Session
Sixty-seventh General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

BILL F

LLS NO. 10-0236.01 Brita Darling **SENATE BILL**

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Sandoval, Boyd, Hudak

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Gagliardi, Kefalas

Senate Committees **House Committees**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY POVERTY REDUCTION TASK FORCE.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. This bill specifies that the duties of the economic opportunity poverty reduction task force (task force) include developing a relevant, fluid model for assessing progress toward reducing poverty and increasing economic opportunity in Colorado. Once a model is developed, the task force will recommend that the general assembly adopt the task force's model for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of certain public programs and policies in achieving the goals of the task force.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. 2-2-1405 (2), Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

2-2-1405. Economic opportunity poverty reduction task force - duties. (2) To carry out its duties pursuant to this section, the task force, at a minimum, shall:

(a) Study and evaluate best policies and practices that:

(I) Build family assets and financial stability;

(II) Increase preschool through postsecondary educational opportunities;

(III) Expand the work force with quality jobs that meet private sector needs;

(IV) Make work pay through the use of fair and sustainable targeted tax policies; and

(V) Address work-support issues;

(b) Study and evaluate:

(I) Federally supported and state-supported programs that serve persons living in poverty;

(II) The economic impact of poverty;

(III) Current policies and services that affect persons living below the self-sufficiency standard;

(IV) How various issues interact to impact poverty, such as a lack of education, health care, housing, income, child care, and food security;

(V) The Colorado works program, with the goal of recommending changes to increase pathways to self-sufficiency; and

(VI) The supplemental nutrition assistance program, with the goal of recommending changes to increase participation and secure additional federal dollars for assistance with education and training; ~~and~~

(c) DEVELOP A RELEVANT, FLUID MODEL FOR ONGOING ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS TOWARD REDUCING POVERTY AND INCREASING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY IN COLORADO AND RECOMMEND THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPT THE TASK FORCE'S MODEL FOR PURPOSES OF EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CERTAIN PUBLIC PROGRAMS AND POLICIES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PUBLIC PROGRAMS IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF THE TASK FORCE; AND

~~(c)~~ (d) Review findings and make legislative recommendations, each year, if appropriate, to the legislative council in conformance with rule 24 of the joint rules of the senate and the house of representatives. Legislation recommended by the task force shall be treated as legislation recommended by an interim legislative committee for purposes of any introduction deadlines or bill limitations imposed by the joint rules of the general assembly.

SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act shall take effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 11, 2010, if adjournment sine die is on May 12, 2010); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part shall not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2010 and shall take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

Second Regular Session
Sixty-seventh General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

BILL G

LLS NO. 10-0232.01 Bob Lackner **HOUSE BILL**

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Kagan, Gagliardi

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Boyd,

House Committees **Senate Committees**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING AUTHORIZATION FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC ENTITIES TO ENTER INTO VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS AFFECTING RENT ON PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. Current law prohibits counties and municipalities from enacting any ordinance or resolution that would control rent on private residential property (rent control statute). The bill clarifies that the rent control statute applies only to private residential housing units.

The bill also clarifies that nothing in the rent control statute shall

prohibit or restrict the right of a property owner and a state agency, county, municipality, or housing authority (public entity) from voluntarily entering into and enforcing an agreement that controls rent on a private residential housing unit, whether the agreement is entered into before, on, or after the effective date of the bill. An agreement authorized pursuant to the act may specify how long a unit is subject to its terms, whether or not subsequent property owners are subject to the agreement, and remedies for early termination agreed to by both the property owner and the public entity. Finally, the rent control statute shall not preclude public entities from cooperatively entering into an agreement, nor shall it preclude the assignment of rights and remedies to any party to the agreement.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. 38-12-301, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

38-12-301. Control of rents by counties and municipalities prohibited. (1) The general assembly finds and declares that the imposition of rent control on private residential housing units is a matter of statewide concern; therefore, no county or municipality may enact any ordinance or resolution ~~which~~ THAT would control ~~rents~~ RENT on A private residential ~~property~~ HOUSING UNIT.

(2) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO PROHIBIT OR RESTRICT THE RIGHT OF A PROPERTY OWNER AND A STATE AGENCY, COUNTY, MUNICIPALITY, OR HOUSING AUTHORITY TO VOLUNTARILY ENTER INTO AND ENFORCE AN AGREEMENT THAT CONTROLS RENT ON A PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL HOUSING UNIT, WHETHER THE AGREEMENT IS ENTERED INTO BEFORE, ON, OR AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS SECTION, AS AMENDED.

(3) AN AGREEMENT AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION MAY SPECIFY HOW LONG A PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL HOUSING UNIT IS SUBJECT TO ITS TERMS, WHETHER OR NOT SUBSEQUENT PROPERTY

OWNERS ARE SUBJECT TO THE AGREEMENT, AND REMEDIES FOR EARLY TERMINATION AGREED TO BY BOTH THE PROPERTY OWNER AND THE STATE AGENCY, COUNTY, MUNICIPALITY, OR HOUSING AUTHORITY.

(4) THIS SECTION SHALL NOT PRECLUDE STATE AGENCIES, COUNTIES, MUNICIPALITIES, OR HOUSING AUTHORITIES FROM COOPERATIVELY ENTERING INTO AGREEMENTS PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION, NOR SHALL IT PRECLUDE THE ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS AND REMEDIES TO ANY PARTY TO THE AGREEMENT.

(5) This section is not intended to impair the right of any state agency, county, or municipality to manage and control any property in which it has an interest through a housing authority or similar agency.

SECTION 2. Act subject to petition - specified effective date - applicability. (1) This act shall take effect September 1, 2010; except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly, then the act, item, section, or part shall not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2010 and shall take effect on January 1, 2011, or on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor, whichever is later.

(2) The provisions of this act shall apply to agreements entered into before, on, or after the applicable effective date of this act.

Second Regular Session
Sixty-seventh General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

BILL H

LLS NO. 10-0288.01 Brita Darling **SENATE BILL**

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Hudak,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Gagliardi,

Senate Committees **House Committees**

A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING COLLABORATION IN THE PROVISION OF MULTI-AGENCY SERVICES.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not necessarily reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted.)

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force. Currently, county departments of social services may enter with certain agencies into memorandums of understanding (MOU's) that are designed to promote a collaborative system of local-level interagency oversight groups and individualized service and support teams to coordinate and manage the provision of services to children and families who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services. This bill includes a listing of additional agencies or entities that may also be included in an MOU. The agencies or entities that may be included are: Community colleges and postsecondary career and technical education colleges or programs, early childhood councils, boards of cooperative services, regional service councils, family resource centers, and workforce centers.

The bill includes amendments that clarify that if any of these additional agencies or entities are included in the MOU, that agency or entity shall have the same rights and responsibilities as any other participant in the MOU.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly hereby finds and declares that:

(a) Achieving the goals of improving economic opportunity and decreasing poverty in Colorado will require a coordinated effort on the part of state policymakers and program administrators;

(b) Programs and policies that assist families in need of immediate assistance, short-term assistance, and long-term support need to be crafted and administered with the overriding goals of poverty reduction and family self-sufficiency in mind;

(c) No person or family is the same, and public programs for struggling families cannot be crafted or carried out in a vacuum;

(d) By supporting a wide range of approaches, including applying prevention strategies, creating partnerships with the private sector, identifying and encouraging community-based efforts, and exploring tax-based strategies, state leaders can improve the lives of children and families while at the same time strengthening local economies.

(2) The general assembly therefore finds that it is appropriate to encourage collaboration and alliances among existing entities with the goal of reducing poverty in Colorado through the provision of comprehensive and coordinated support services and education to

children and families.

SECTION 2. 24-1.9-102 (1), (2) (b), (2) (d), (2) (g), (2) (h) (I), (2) (i), and (4), Colorado Revised Statutes, are amended to read:

24-1.9-102. Memorandum of understanding - local-level interagency oversight groups - individualized service and support teams - coordination of services for children and families - requirements - waiver. (1) (a) Local representatives of each of the agencies specified in this paragraph (a) and county departments of social services may enter into memorandums of understanding that are designed to promote a collaborative system of local-level interagency oversight groups and individualized service and support teams to coordinate and manage the provision of services to children and families who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services. The memorandums of understanding entered into pursuant to this subsection (1) shall be between interested county departments of social services and local representatives of each of the following agencies or entities:

(I) The local judicial districts, including probation services;

(II) The health department, whether a county, district, or regional health department;

(III) The local school district or school districts;

(IV) Each community mental health center;

(V) Each behavioral health organization;

(VI) The division of youth corrections;

(VII) A designated managed service organization for the provision of treatment services for alcohol and drug abuse pursuant to section 25-1-206.5, C.R.S.; and

(VIII) A domestic abuse program as defined in section 26-7.5-102, C.R.S., if representation from such a program is available.

(a.5) IN ADDITION TO THE PARTIES SPECIFIED IN PARAGRAPH (a) OF THIS SUBSECTION (1), THE MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING ENTERED INTO PURSUANT TO THIS SUBSECTION (1) MAY INCLUDE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES OR ENTITIES:

(I) COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND POSTSECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION COLLEGES AND PROGRAMS;

(II) EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCILS CREATED PURSUANT TO PART 1 OF ARTICLE 6.5 OF TITLE 26, C.R.S.;

(III) BOARDS OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES CREATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5 OF TITLE 22, C.R.S.;

(IV) REGIONAL SERVICE COUNCILS CREATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5.5 OF TITLE 22, C.R.S.;

(V) FAMILY RESOURCE CENTERS CREATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 18 OF TITLE 26, C.R.S.; AND

(VI) WORKFORCE CENTERS EXISTING PURSUANT TO THE COLORADO WORKS PROGRAM AS DESCRIBED IN PART 7 OF ARTICLE 2 OF TITLE 26, C.R.S.

(b) The general assembly strongly encourages the agencies specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of this subsection (1) to enter into memorandums of understanding that are regional.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (b) of this subsection (1), the agencies specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of this subsection (1) may enter into memorandums of understanding involving only one or more county departments of social services, not necessarily by region, as may be appropriate to ensure the effectiveness of local-level interagency oversight groups and individualized service and support teams in the county or counties.

(d) In developing the memorandums of understanding, the general assembly strongly encourages the parties to the memorandums of understanding ~~specified in paragraph (a) of this subsection (1)~~ to seek input, support, and collaboration from key stakeholders in the private and non-profit sector, as well as parent advocacy or family advocacy organizations that represent family members or caregivers of children who would benefit from multi-agency services.

(e) Nothing shall preclude the agencies specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of this subsection (1) from including parties in addition to the agencies specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of this subsection (1) in the memorandums of understanding developed for purposes of this section.

(2) (b) **Identification of services and funding sources.** The memorandum of understanding shall specify the legal responsibilities and funding sources of each party to the memorandum of understanding ~~specified in paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of this section~~ as those responsibilities and funding sources relate to children and families who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services, including the identification of the specific services that may be provided. Specific services that may be provided may include, but are not limited to: Prevention, intervention, and treatment services; family preservation services; family stabilization services; out-of-home placement services; services for children at imminent risk of out-of-home placement; probation services; services for children with mental illness; public assistance services; medical assistance services; child welfare services; and any additional services which the parties deem necessary to identify.

(d) **Creation of an oversight group.** The memorandum of understanding shall create a local-level interagency oversight group and identify the oversight group's membership requirements, procedures for selection of officers, procedures for resolving disputes by a majority vote of those members authorized to vote, and procedures for establishing any necessary subcommittees of the interagency oversight group. Each interagency oversight group shall include a local representative of each party to the memorandum of understanding specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of subsection (1) of this section, each of whom shall be a voting member of the interagency oversight group. In addition, the interagency oversight group may include, but is not limited to, the following advisory nonvoting members:

(I) Representatives of interested local private sector entities; and

(II) Family members or caregivers of children who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services or current or previous consumers of integrated multi-agency services.

(g) **Authorization to contribute resources and funding.** The memorandum of understanding shall specify that each party to the memorandum of understanding ~~specified in paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of this section~~ has the authority to contribute time, resources, and funding to solve problems identified by the local-level interagency oversight group in order to create a seamless, collaborative system of delivering multi-agency services to children and families, upon approval by the head or director of each agency or department specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of subsection (1) of this section.

(h) **Reinvestment of moneys saved to serve additional children and families.** (I) The memorandum of understanding shall require the interagency oversight group to create a procedure, subject to approval by the head or director of each agency or department specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of subsection (1) of this section, to allow any moneys resulting from waivers granted by the federal government and any state general fund savings realized as a result of the implementation of the collaborative system of management of multi-agency services provided to children and families related to the funding sources specified by the parties to the memorandum of understanding pursuant to paragraph (b) of this subsection (2) to be reinvested by the parties to the memorandum of understanding to provide appropriate services to children and families who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services, as the population is defined by the memorandum of understanding pursuant to paragraph (c) of this subsection (2). The general fund savings realized, as referenced in this section, shall be determined in accordance with rules established by the state board of human services.

(i) **Performance-based measures.** The memorandum of understanding shall include a provision stating whether the parties to the memorandum of understanding will attempt to meet performance measures specified by the department of human services and elements of collaborative management, as defined by rule of the state board of human services. If the parties to the memorandum of understanding agree to attempt to meet the performance measures and elements of collaborative management, the memorandum of understanding shall require the interagency oversight group to create a procedure, subject to the approval of the head or director of each agency or department specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of subsection (1) of this section, to allow any incentive moneys received by the department of human services and allocated pursuant to section 24-1.9-104 to be reinvested by the parties to the memorandum of understanding to provide appropriate services to children and families who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services, as such population is defined by the memorandum of understanding pursuant to paragraph (c) of this subsection (2).

(4) The departments and agencies that provide oversight to the parties to the memorandum of understanding specified in ~~paragraph~~ PARAGRAPHS (a) AND (a.5) of subsection (1) of this section are authorized to issue waivers of any rules to which the departments and agencies are subject and that would prevent the departments from effective implementation of the memorandums of understanding, however, the departments and agencies are prohibited from waiving a rule in violation of federal law or that would compromise the safety of a child.

SECTION 3. 24-1.9-102.5, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

24-1.9-102.5. Evaluation. The department of human services is authorized to utilize moneys in the performance-based collaborative management incentive cash fund created in section 24-1.9-104 for ongoing external evaluations of the counties participating in memorandums of understanding pursuant to section 24-1.9-102, also known as the collaborative management program, as well as those counties that opted to not participate in the collaborative management program. The external evaluation shall include an evaluation that may be required in connection with a waiver authorized pursuant to section 24-1.9-102 (4). The department of human services, with input from the counties, agencies as listed in section 24-1.9-102 (1) (a) AND (1) (a.5), the division of youth corrections in the department of human services, participating stakeholders in the private and nonprofit sector, and participating parent or family advocacy organizations that represent family members or caregivers of children who would benefit from multi-agency services participating in the collaborative management program, shall develop the criteria and components of the external evaluation. Each county participating in the collaborative management program shall participate fully in the annual external evaluation. The department of human services is authorized to perform an evaluation pursuant to this section on an ongoing basis as needed, as determined by the department of human services and subject to available appropriations.

SECTION 4. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act shall take effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 11, 2010, if adjournment sine die is on May 12, 2010); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part shall not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2010 and shall take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY POVERTY REDUCTION TASK FORCE 2009

COMMUNITY REPORT

Members of the Committee

Representative John Kefalas, Chair

Senator Paula Sandoval, Vice-Chair

Senator Betty Boyd

Representative Sara Gagliardi

Senator Evie Hudak

Representative Daniel Kagan

Senator Mark Scheffel

Representative Ken Summers

Senator Al White

Representative Mark Waller

Staff

Anne Bellows, Legislative Aide to Representative Kefalas

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Report Contributors

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Emily Sirota, Volunteer Copy Editor

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Introduction from Representative Kefalas--

To Members of the 67th Colorado General Assembly and the Community:

I am proud to submit this first-year report, from the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force to the members of the 67th Colorado General Assembly and the community. Pursuant to C.R.S. 2-2-1405 (3) (a) (b), this particular document complements the report prepared by the Colorado Legislative Council, which includes a summary of the work achieved by the Task Force and our legislative recommendations.

This more substantive publication originates from the methodical work of the five task force subcommittees, the numerous community-based organizations, and the individuals, families and small businesses that actively participated with their expertise, ideas and personal stories.

From the beginning, we committed to an inclusive process that embraced many perspectives on the complex issues related to child and family poverty and the nexus between economic opportunity and poverty reduction. I believe we succeeded in raising the bar on this critical conversation while laying a solid foundation for our future work.

I am most grateful for my legislative colleagues who served as engaged members of the task force and who devoted many hours listening to testimony, asking tough questions, processing significant amounts of information and chairing subcommittees. This was not an academic exercise because we produced useful results that can guide us towards solutions. We found some bi-partisan common ground, and were able to move past polarizing rhetoric. Of course we did not agree on everything, but we did listen to one another. This is important.

I am also grateful for our non-partisan Legislative Council and Legal Services staff. They are true professionals of the highest caliber, always going above and beyond the call of duty. And I am grateful for our department and agency staff who put in countless hours to provide us with the valuable information necessary to assess current state policies and practices that advance economic opportunity and reduce poverty. These folks are competent and dedicated public servants, and I am honored to serve with them on behalf of the common good.

For me personally, it was critical that we move the dial to reframe and rethink the issues of child and family poverty. In other words, people understand that there is a proper role for the public sector to provide a strong and effective safety net in collaboration with our community-based non-profits and faith-based partners. And people understand the moral component of protecting our most vulnerable neighbors, such as children that are hungry, elders that survive on fixed incomes or families that live paycheck to paycheck.

What is often missing in these deliberations is the inextricable connection between public services, the business community and sustainable economic development. A skilled workforce is an essential ingredient for a vibrant economy, which is essential for creating jobs. People understand that the best way out of poverty is a quality education and a quality job and that personal responsibility and shared responsibility go hand in hand.

I believe we succeeded in putting some of these missing pieces together by showing that poverty reduction is good for business and good for the taxpayer. As the task force continues to study and analyze these issues, we will focus on economic modeling, reliable poverty measures, best practices and synergistic collaborations. In the second year of the task force, we "shall develop a strategic, integrated and comprehensive plan that, once implemented, will expand economic opportunities in Colorado and, by 2019, reduce by at least 50% the number of Coloradans, including children and families, living in poverty." After all that is our charge and I am quite serious about succeeding. Thank you for the privilege of serving as Task Force Chair.

Sincerely,

John Kefalas
Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force Chair
State Representative, House District 52

Introduction from Senator Sandoval--

To Members of the 67th Colorado General Assembly and the Community:

HB09-1064 charges the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force with creating a strategic, integrated comprehensive plan to expand economic opportunities in Colorado with the goal, that by the year 2019, (in ten years) the number of families and children living in poverty would be reduced by fifty percent. The Metrics Subcommittee is charged with identifying the scope of the problem as it exists today and to establish a baseline by which progress will be measured. Additionally, the Metrics subcommittee is charged with identifying what metrics will be used to measure the progress.

The bill defines poverty as living at or below one hundred percent of the Federal Poverty Level. If our current baseline measure states that between 636,000 and 890,000 people are at or below poverty level (www.statehealthfacts.org, Kaiser Family Foundation, 2009) this means that we will need to create opportunities for between 318,000 and 445,000 Coloradoans to move towards self-sufficiency over the next ten years.

Using the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is the traditional way of measuring poverty. Although FPL is the current federal government calculation used to determine the minimum amount of income that a family needs for food, clothing, transportation, shelter, and the basic necessities, it is only calculated using the cost of food multiplied by three. When the FPL was first established in 1965, families spent a third of their income on food. Today, Congress is reconsidering this measure because food is no longer the primary cost factor in a household budget.

The FPL offers a limited perspective of poverty. As Vice-Chair of the task force and Chair of the task force's subcommittee on metrics, I have come to the conclusion that we must look at other metrics to get a multi-dimensional view of poverty. Our experts on the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force Metrics Subcommittee, along with current thinking, recognize that the FPL is, in many respects, an antiquated method of measuring poverty. As an example, it does not take into account that food is no longer the biggest expenditure in a family's budget; whereas, things like housing, healthcare and childcare now make up a significant part of a family's budget. For Colorado, to put itself on par with current thinking in the area, we also need to address self-sufficiency and the National Academy of Science standards for poverty. Full explanations of these measurement tools can be found in the final report of the committee's work published by the Colorado Legislative Council. The website follows: http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/povertyreductiontaskforce

As a result of our efforts this session, the metrics subcommittee recommends that we not only look at the current Federal Poverty Level, but also, where data is available, look at other factors that influence poverty. This would put Colorado in a better position, should the method of measuring poverty be modernized through the passage of the Measuring American Poverty Act of 2009. The metrics subcommittee is also proposing that we not only look at the number of families not meeting the threshold of the FPL, but also look at gradations of poverty in out state.

This report contains a model for measuring the reduction of poverty in Colorado through economic opportunity and the reduction of barriers households face as they work towards self-sufficiency. I have learned, through this process that we need to consider:

- The gradations of poverty
- The opportunities available people in poverty
- The barriers preventing people from getting out of poverty
- How policies and legislation effect the economic opportunities (education, asset building, access to jobs and work supports) Colorado families have on their pathways to greater economic security.

The Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force is proposing a working model. We may not have all the boxes and flow right, but hopefully you get an idea of the picture we're trying to portray. We will use the model to inform our Strategic Plan for Reducing Poverty and Increasing Economic Opportunity over the next 10 years. We hope you continue to support and join our efforts.

Sincerely,

Senator Paula Sandoval
Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force Vice Chair
State Senator, Senate District 34

Excerpt from the of Economic Opportunity Act of 1964

"Although the economic well-being and prosperity of the United States have progressed to a level surpassing any achieved in world history, and although these benefits are widely shared throughout the Nation, poverty continues to be the lot of a substantial number of our people. The United States can achieve its full economic and social potential as a nation only if every individual has the opportunity to contribute to the full extent of his capabilities and to participate in the workings of our society. It is, therefore, the policy of the United States to eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this Nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity. It is the purpose of this Act to strengthen, supplement, and coordinate efforts in furtherance of that policy." ***--Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (EOA) (P.L. 88-452, 78 Stat. 508), President Lyndon Johnson***

In 1964 Colorado had a poverty rate of 19% (www.census.gov/histpov) and John A. Love was governor. Colorado was considered to be prosperous--expanding through tourism and a booming ski industry. Environmental protection was the statewide topic of the day, although the Civil Rights Movement, the Viet Nam War and poverty held the national stage. Addressing poverty and increasing economic opportunity came to Colorado only in the form of a national movement for children called the Head Start program.

> *"In 1964, a panel of 14 physicians, educators, social workers, psychiatrists and psychologists spent six weeks drawing up a revolutionary blueprint. The result? A preschool program designed, first and foremost, to improve poor children's health. Other goals included helping children to succeed and involving their parents in their education. Today,* ***Head Start*** *debates focus on teaching children about letters and numbers. But in 1964, 'improving the child's mental processes and skills' was just one of seven objectives."* ***--Holly Yettick, Rocky Mountain News, 2003)***

Today Colorado ranks 9th for personal per capita income and 14th for median household income (www.factfinder.census.gov). Per Forbes.com 2009, Colorado is the 4th best state for business. According to the most recent U.S. Census data, the poverty rate for Colorado is 11.4%, lower than 25 years ago, but with more children falling into poverty than ever before.

> The number and percent of children in poverty has increased since 2000. Importantly, the number of children in extreme poverty (50 percent of the federal poverty level) has more than doubled, increasing 137 percent since 2000. Although the numbers of children in low-income (200% above the federal poverty level) households has decreased by 12 percent, many of these children may have fallen into poverty, contributing to the rise of children in these income categories." (2009 KidsCount in Colorado!, Colorado Children's Campaign)

Over the last 25 years, dedicated legislators, who are long time advocates for families, children and the disadvantaged, have attempted to define the correlation between economic growth and poverty reduction. Colorado observations and conversations relating economic opportunity and poverty reduction have been consistent with the national debate that spans a complex spectrum of views. The focus of debate centers on two potentially conflicting ideas regarding policy or legislation; 1) all that matters is economic growth, and only policies that are targeted on economic opportunity can generate poverty reduction or 2) only policies that are successful in reducing poverty can yield higher opportunity in aggregate.

Under the leadership of Colorado State Representative John Kefalas, the Common Good Caucus was created in spring 2007 as a bipartisan/bicameral forum "for legislators interested in addressing poverty through public policy and private sector solutions that promote self-sufficiency, family well-being, and community development." In fall 2007, the caucus helped a coalition of advocacy groups organize the second in a series of statewide "listening tours" aimed at gaining a better understanding of the challenges that low-income families face, especially those on the edge of crisis who are living paycheck to paycheck. Fact sheets, a short video and other material generated by the 2006 and 2007 listening tours are available by request (format: DVD) from the Colorado Center on Law and Policy.

Today Representative John Kefalas (House District 52) and Senator Paula Sandoval (Senate District 34) lead the latest effort in the ongoing "poverty" conversation for Colorado. In 2009, under the sponsorship of Representative Kefalas and recognizing the need to address these issues in Colorado, the General Assembly passed House Bill 09-1064, which was signed into law by the Governor on June 1, 2009. This bill reflects collective efforts of legislators and community organizations throughout the state, which are committed to making Colorado a more promising place to live for all children, families and individuals.

Pursuant to House Bill 09-1064, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force is required to:

- assess current state policies and practices that promote economic opportunity and poverty reduction with regards to:
  - building family assets and financial stability;
  - increasing educational opportunities;
  - expanding the work force;
  - using targeted tax policies to make work pay; and
  - addressing work-support issues.
- study and evaluate federally supported and state-supported programs that serve persons living in poverty, including nutrition and employment programs;
- examine factors that contribute to poverty and its economic impact; and by December 31, 2010, develop a comprehensive plan for reducing poverty by at least 50 percent in Colorado by 2019.

The two main Task Force outcomes designated in House Bill 09-1064 are:

- increase access to economic and educational opportunities throughout the state in order to help all Colorado families achieve self-sufficiency and reach financial security.
- reduce number of Coloradans, including children and families, living in poverty by fifty percent before 2019 and establishing measurable benchmarks.

This first of annual reports submitted by the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force proposes a general description of the scope of poverty in Colorado today, includes an initial assessment of current policies and procedures that address poverty, outlines the issues being addressed by the Task Force, proposes a timeline for addressing these issues and includes the first year's legislative proposals, as well as short and long term recommendations for the strategic plan.

It is the hope of this committee to establish an enhanced lens for reducing poverty in Colorado. This committee does not ask whether policies promoting economic opportunity are more effective than policies promoting poverty reduction. This committee assumes the two positions are not mutually exclusive and examines the interplay in search of hybrid policies that will produce more effective results for all stakeholders.

"We are here to reduce poverty by creating economic opportunity." –**Colorado State Representative John Kefalas, October 2009**

Although the original computation of federal poverty levels in the United States was simply measured as three times a family's monthly food budget, economists today agree that there are several cost domains that must be considered when computing a level at which a household is living below, at or above subsistence. The current proposed national model for measuring poverty includes the costs of the following goods and services that a family of a particular size and composition would need in a year to live at a standardized minimal level: taxes and tax credits, food, shelter (including utilities), clothing, transportation for work, medical expenses and other necessary items. (Measuring American Poverty Act, 2009) Representative McDermott and Senator Dodd, 111th Congress, July 2009). The Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard mirrors the same cost domains, but adjusts for the geographic location of the household and limits miscellaneous (including clothing) costs to 10% of the overall budget. The interdependence of these basic needs was a primary factor for consideration by the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force and the scope of work examines policies in all seven cost domains.

Plan of Action and Overview of Committee Activities

As required by House Bill 09-1064 the legislative task force must meet at least four times each year, continue through July 1, 2014 and appoint subcommittees. This year the legislative task force, comprised of ten legislators, including senators and representatives from both the majority and minority bodies, met a total of six times from July through October during the 2009 interim.

The concern and desire to see all Colorado families succeed certainly crossed party lines. This bi-partisan tone was set at the very first task force meeting when each appointed legislator stated why they were on the task force and shared childhood events and experiences within their communities which helped form their values and desire to serve in public office. This bi-partisan approach resulted in a better understanding of differing perspectives and initiated a more collaborative process to find the most holistic recommendations for specific poverty challenges. The resulting proposals for legislation were symbolic of several committee votes that went beyond the traditional party line affiliation.

During the 2009 interim the task force appointed five subcommittees that included representatives of executive branch agencies, local governments, business and labor organizations, education organizations, advocates, and other individuals directly impacted by the work of the task force. Each subcommittee was chaired by a member of the task force and was required to advise the task force in completing its duties. Each subcommittee met at least four times and made recommendations to the full task force pertaining to a particular subject area.

Subcommittees were appointed in the following subject areas:

- Housing and Utilities;
- Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports;
- Access to and Coordination of Benefits and Nonprofit/Faith Based Services;
- Scope of the Problem and Metrics; and
- Poverty and Education.

The full task force met six times during the 2009 interim and was aired via internet, allowing for interested parties to listen to the testimonies, presentations and proceedings. Task force meetings were devoted to the discussion of poverty definitions and measurements, statewide poverty data compared to data from other states, state programs related to poverty reduction and economic development, and specific impacts of poverty. The task force heard wide-ranging presentations from agencies of state, regional, and local governments, as well as various entities involved in poverty reduction and economic opportunity, including:

- Center for Law and Social Policy;
- 9 to 5 National Association of Working Women;
- Colorado Children's Campaign;

- Colorado Community and Interagency Council on Homelessness;
- Invest in Kids and Nurse-Family Partnership;
- Front Range Economic Strategy Center (FRESC);
- Colorado Building and Trade Apprenticeship programs;
- county commissioners;
- county workforce centers and human services departments; and
- higher education institutions.

In addition updates on subcommittee activities and suggested recommendations were presented to the full task force for discussion. In October 2009, at the end of the first interim session eight legislative bills were drafted and approved by the task force. These bills will be introduced to the General Assembly during the 2010 session.

The Structure and Impact of Public Input

Advisory Group:

Colorado has a substantial number of interested stakeholders, foundations, established non-profits and community-based / faith-based organizations who are committed to finding better ways to assist our state's disadvantaged individuals and families who are living in poverty and struggling day to day. In an effort to bring as many perspectives together as possible the Chairs of the task force, and interested parties, convened an informal advisory group to create a plan for the implementation of the task force. This planning process assisted in identifying recommended research, began the assessment of current programs and best practices, expanded outreach and participation, and identified potential subject matter experts. The advisory group was a unique vehicle for the Task force to get a head start on the interim work and generate interest throughout the State. Among other activities, the advisory group:

- requested and assisted with surveying targeted key state departments to identify and evaluate programs that currently address economic opportunity and poverty reduction
  Link to final survey report (http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/povertyreductiontaskforce)
- surveyed Colorado counties, compiling best practices and local level initiatives which address poverty reduction within broad reaching collaborative efforts (Appendix I)
- raised money to support the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force coordinator
- promoted an open meeting format and established a process for public input
- participated in and informed task force members of America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funded programs and requested a compilation of ongoing ARRA funding that could have an impact on economic opportunity and poverty reduction. Task force members convened a public meeting with managers from key state departments to set potential benchmarks for the use of ARRA money in programs designed to increase economic opportunity and/or reduce poverty.
- completed a review of access points to current Colorado non-profits which resulted in the discussion to consider purchasing a comprehensive data base for the state's non-profits and faith-based organizations providing services (Appendix II).
- successfully implemented a plan to expand outreach efforts for subcommittee task force participants

Public Participation:

In an unprecedented effort to have people living in poverty share their ideas for improving access to economic security, the task force agreed to host public forums at each of the full task force meetings. Over 20 mothers, low-wage workers, students, unemployed, homeless and special needs' Colorado residents testified to the challenges and successes they encountered as they struggled to make ends meet. Stakeholder organizations were encouraged to invite constituents and encourage the connection between real life and policy through this dialogue. These testimonies complemented the data-laden presentations of policy researchers and analysts.

Among the prominent issues important to Colorado families were family-friendly work policies such as paid sick days, avoiding the benefits "cliff effect" while increasing their pay and moving from public assistance, having the opportunity to compete for livable wage jobs, keeping affordable health care and housing, connections to good education for their kids, and access to healthy food. The "Realities of Low-Income Working Families Panel" highlighted the effort to include those most affected by poverty.

This panel was asked to discuss challenges and opportunities involving: building family assets and financial stability; increasing educational opportunities and upgrading work skills; making work pay; addressing child care and other work supports; and becoming self-sufficient. The panel consisted of five public witnesses and was moderated by 9to5 National Association of Working Women. The presentation was varied and promoted a full view of the importance of removing obstacles to economic opportunity and poverty reduction.

An In-Depth Look at the Work of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force

Summary of Task Force Meetings:

Task force meetings were devoted to the discussion of poverty definitions and measurements, statewide poverty data compared to data from other sates, state programs related to poverty reduction and economic development, and specific impacts of poverty. The task force met six times during the 2009 interim. Task force meetings were devoted to the discussion of poverty definitions and measurements, statewide poverty data compared to data from other states, state programs related to poverty reduction and economic development, and specific impacts of poverty. The task force heard testimonies from agencies of state, regional, and local governments, as well as various entities involved in poverty reduction and economic development. In addition, each of the five subcommittees met at least four times over the interim. Updates on subcommittee activities and suggested recommendations were presented to the full task force for discussion. An opportunity for public testimony was provided at each meeting. For more information and detailed minutes, please refer to the **Legislative Council's Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force Website:**

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/povertyreductiontaskforce

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force Subcommittees:

Five task force subcommittees were formed in order to better to study the issues, which directly impact poverty and economic development. The Five subcommittees were 1) Housing & Utilities, 2) Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports, 3) Access to and Coordination of Public Benefits and Non-Profit/Faith-Based Assistance, 4) Scope of the Problem and Metrics of Poverty and 5) Poverty & Education.

Each subcommittee was chaired by at least one legislator from the task force. An additional thirteen voting members were appointed for each committee. The members were selected from various community organizations, key state departments, County Human Service Departments, Workforce Centers, educational institutions, family resource centers, non-profits and faith-based organizations, employers and constituents affected by poverty. Other interested stakeholders and subject experts were invited to attend the subcommittee meetings on an on-going basis.

The original intent was to host a number of subcommittee meetings and task force meetings around the State to better reflect the diverse needs from the Eastern plains to the Western Slope, from the urban centers, to the resort and rural areas. Budget constraints prohibited travel around the state.

Each subcommittee meeting was equipped with a speakerphone with conferencing call-in capability. This system allowed for statewide participation.

Each subcommittee met at least four times between August and the end of October. Most of the subcommittees met more than four times and there are at least two of the subcommittees that plan to continue meeting during the "off" time of the task force.

Summary of Subcommittee Work with Findings and Recommendations

Housing & Utilities Subcommittee

> *"Touching every aspect of community wellbeing, affordable housing is more than just bricks and sticks. The availability of affordable housing affects all of us, not just the residents who benefit from having a safe, decent and stable place to call home. Affordable housing is the cornerstone of healthy, sustainable communities. Housing balance - a healthy mix of housing options, including market-rate and affordable rental housing, single-family homes, duplexes, as well as developments for seniors-ensures opportunities for all individuals to improve their economic situation and contribute to their communities. By providing critical stability, access to jobs and services, and reducing the pressure on limited household budgets, quality affordable housing is part of the solution to some of our most pressing challenges."--* ***(2009 Housing Colorado Facts Book, November 2009)***

The Housing & Utilities Subcommittee was co-chaired by Representative Daniel Kagan and Representative Sarah Gagliardi. Although housing topics are varied and complex, the chairs determined that topics should be discreet on short term and long-term issues.

Over five public evening meetings, hosted by the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, the housing subcommittee heard from subject matter experts and advocates in public utilities, special needs' populations, homelessness, housing finance, rental assistance programs and the lack of reliable data or program evaluation for low-income housing assistance. To narrow the scope for maximum impact, the 13-voting member subcommittee agreed to concentrate on the following areas.

Main Areas for Study:

- Secure more affordable housing in developments around the state.
- Discuss the particular needs of those being released from prison and the difficulties they have finding housing.
- Review what housing assistance programs are already out there and what's available.
- Review topics using the framework of barriers and good case studies in each.

After five subcommittee meetings and a survey monkey, an online survey tool used to capture the opinions of a targeted audience, of participating members, (Appendix III) the Housing & Utilities Subcommittee presented its first year's recommendations to the full task force.

The 2009 final recommendations from the Housing Subcommittee include:

- **Land Use Agreements:** Legislation that would make it so that any agreements on affordable housing that are reached between a developer and a local government would remain intact when there is a change over in developer. All subsequent developers would have to adhere to the agreement for affordable housing requirements. Legislation would require overturning the Telluride Decision.

- **Inclusionary Zoning:** Policy that would require developers who are creating new residential developments must include housing for those who are low-income.

- **TIF Set-Aside for Affordable Housing:** This policy would propose that as tax receipts come in, there would have to be a set aside of a certain percentage of taxes to fund affordable housing projects. In Colorado the municipalities would have to amend their TIF laws to make this change.

- **Affordable Housing TIF District:** This policy proposes that a bond would be issued and investors buy the bond for cash. The bond is handed over to the developer as a subsidy. The bondholders are then paid back over the ensuing twenty-five year period with the incremental sales and/or property taxes paid by those who inhabit the development. Thus, the governments in effect forfeit the tax receipts in the years following the development, because they are given as subsidies to the developer.

- **Community Benefit Agreements:** These agreements state that when a developer comes in to do a project, they have to sit down at the table with representatives from the community, who will have input on how the project should be undertaken. Communities can have the opportunity to generate revenue for affordable housing from these types of agreements.

- **Allow for Residential Developments in Transit Zones:** Legislation being drafted that would amend the state law to allow land leased by RTD (Regional Transportation District) to be developed for residential purposes. Work with RTD to accept affordable housing with new FasTracks and Gold Line developments.

- **Amend Tax Credit Partner Law:** Policy to change current law so that the current law no longer requires developers to partner with a Public Housing Authority as a requirement for receiving a tax credit for affordable housing. Examples of current barriers include Durango, where for political reasons, the Housing Authority couldn't partner with Mercy Housing, and so Mercy Housing couldn't get the tax credit. Amending the law of required partnership with Housing Authorities in order for developers to get the federal low-income housing tax credit for affordable housing would make it easier to develop affordable housing.

- **Creation of an affordable Housing Trust Fund for the State of Colorado:** Legislation would fund the creation, preservation and maintenance of affordable housing developments.

- **Land Donation Tax Credits:** This policy would make it possible for anyone who donates free land to an affordable housing developer to get a tax credit.

- **Property Tax Exemptions for Affordable Housing Developments:** Policy to ensure that the current stock of affordable housing in Colorado is being preserved by prohibiting developers from buying affordable housing developments and then turning them into other types of residential developments.

- **Re-examine the status of Section 8 Housing in Colorado:** Policy to evaluate the impact of the Section 8 Housing programs in Colorado.

Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports Subcommittee

> *Respondents were asked to choose reasons or contributing factors to their homeless situation. Unemployment and housing costs are top contributing factors to homelessness.*
>
> *Losing a job (34.7%) was the most frequent contributing factor respondents reported to their homeless situation.*--***(Denver Metropolitan Area 2009 Homeless Point In Time; Key Findings Ninth Point in Time Study, A Collaborative Effort Between The Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative & The Colorado Department of Human Services, 2009)***
>
> *Colorado "has a low high school graduation rate and a talent development pipeline that is "leaking" at all stages, leaving local workers inadequately prepared to compete in the fast-growing, high-wage industries in the area."*--***(Denver-Metro Wired Initiative, Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force, 2009)***

Representative Mark Waller (House District 15) chaired the Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports subcommittee. Subcommittee members agreed it was important to recognize that there were different reasons for poverty, different degrees of poverty and that a job alone did not necessarily guarantee a way out of poverty.

The big picture debate of which comes first, economic opportunity or poverty reduction was enhanced by the specific debate of "any job is a job now" versus good jobs that pay a "living wage". Because of the current economic crisis, there has been a significant increase in situational or circumstantial poverty within the state. Some members in the subcommittee felt pressure to prioritize these issues in hopes of minimizing the negative impacts affecting our families and our state. Equally, the subcommittee did not want to ignore the plight of those struggling to get out of generational poverty.

It was agreed that both groups have pressing needs and require effective economic opportunity strategies, as well as, strategies for career advancement and affordable work supports. To meet the challenge of a broad range of topics, the subcommittee created work groups focusing on job creation, workforce development/removing barriers, and best practices.

Main Areas for Study:

- **"Realities of Low-Income Working Families":** Most service jobs do not offer employee benefits, any affordable health care, lack of paid sick leave, lack of opportunities and time to increase their skills to advance in the workforce.

- **Best Practices from Small Businesses:** Reference to task force presentations from New Belgium Brewing Company, Efficient Forms, Colorado Building and Trade Apprenticeship Programs, and several businesses participating in The Source Model, on September 8, 2009. Given that small businesses and micro-businesses comprise the majority of businesses in Colorado continued participation of the business community, including the National Federation of Independent Businesses and the Rocky Mountain Micro-Finance Institute, is critical to increased economic opportunity.

- **Business Opportunity and Expansion:** Director Don Marostica's, from the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT), presentation provided an overview of current programs within the state. Although OEDIT does not specifically consider poverty reduction when working with businesses, staff does see economic opportunity as a means to improving the quality of life for communities across the state. Four main target industries for the state have been identified as clean energy, tourism, aerospace, and biosciences.

- **Education and Training:** One of Colorado's strong selling points for economic opportunity and expansion is its educated workforce. However, according to current statistics, 55% of the workforce in the Denver-metro area does not have an Associate Degree. To remain competitive educational opportunity for Colorado's low- and mid-skilled workers needs to focus on skill and credential attainment relevant to the current core industry. The committee compiled a list of a few local, state, and national initiatives that have been successful in reducing poverty through job creation and economic development (Appendix IV).

- **Challenges in Rural Colorado:** Input from rural and resort representatives emphasized challenges to sustainable employment such as; lack of public transportation, young adults leaving the area for better economic opportunities elsewhere, and the fear that because rural numbers reflect a smaller percentage of the state's disadvantaged many uniquely rural needs will not be fully addressed in policy.

- **Special Needs Populations:** The subcommittee explored the challenges faced by Colorado's more disadvantaged populations particularly ex-offenders, youth (30 percent of whom are uninsured and living in poverty), the "55-Plus" population, under-represented minorities, the homeless, and individuals with mental illness or other disabilities. The subcommittee agreed it was important to target those historically underrepresented to access training opportunities in order to compete for jobs that provided sustainable incomes and career advancement.

- **High Cost of Child Care:** "In many cases, the average child care fees for a family are often higher than what the family spends on food. In addition, the average monthly child care expenses for a family with two children exceeds the median rent cost for housing and are often higher than the monthly mortgage payment in every state in the nation, including Colorado." (2009 KidsCount in Colorado!, Colorado Children's Campaign) The subcommittee agreed that working families need to access affordable, quality child care and that this is a critical problem that requires further study and immediate solutions.

The 2009 final recommendations from the Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports Subcommittee include:

Strengthening Business

- Develop statewide initiatives to reduce poverty through incentives for small businesses to develop workplace benefits such as, access to affordable health care, paid sick leave and livable wages, while remaining profitable.

- Promote a healthy business environment, and the need to raise awareness among businesses about programs that are available that could help their employees.

- Explore ways the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) can offer competitive business incentives while ensuring reasonable benefit packages and wages as a foundation for promoting poverty reduction and reducing state public assistance costs.

- Continue to improve Colorado's business-friendly environment in order to compete effectively with our neighboring states, Arizona, New Mexico, and Nevada.

- Support inclusive statewide policy that ensures business participation in economic and workforce development strategies, especially those designed to reduce the impact of poverty.

- Support the expansion of economic diversity across the state and reduce the dependency of a community on one main employer or one main industry.

- Increase the state's ability to retain businesses already located in Colorado through an enhanced communication process between local governments or chambers of commerce and the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT). Increase the ability for OEDIT to intervene with possible options that may be able to stop the relocation of businesses out of the state and reduce the loss of jobs or.

Strengthening the Workforce

- Develop more apprenticeships in skilled work, which could build career paths and provide sufficient income through wages, wage subsidies, and other state assistance programs.

- Collaborate with best practice training initiatives and programs already in place to determine a comprehensive strategic plan for workforce preparation to meet the needs of up-and-coming businesses and industries.

- Increase focus on asset building, education and civic education to help youth achieve self-sufficiency.

- Establish legislation to make the EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) available to those under age 25.

- Increase work opportunities for the disabled population without risk of losing their safety net.

- Expand post employment services (child care, asset building, health benefits, case management, job coaching, etc) for low-income individuals and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) participants and to study the "cliff effect" where just a small increase in earnings can cause significant reductions or a complete loss of benefits, creating another barrier to economic self-sufficiency.

2009 Supplemental Recommendations from the Colorado Department of Labor & Employment: (Appendix V)

- Strengthen the relationships between human services and workforce agencies at the state and local level to achieve a model for poverty diversion. Focus this effort on industry sector strategies that involve career readiness assessments and development of curriculum designed to prepare low skilled, low-income for in-demand jobs.
- Strengthen the partnership between workforce and the Department of Education's dropout prevention programs to achieve a model that involves workforce readiness assessments and preparation within dropout prevention strategies.
- Make permanent the WIA summer youth program through leveraging of federal, state, and local funds, and target it to in-school youth at risk of dropout.
- Promote the use of occupational and industry profiling to determine the skills needs of employers for new and evolving jobs to link the employer community to the poverty reduction initiative.
- Strengthen the relationships among the community colleges, economic development and workforce to leverage training dollars and resources for a focus on industry sector and layoff aversion training strategies.
- Package and promote all the types of state and Federal tax credits (such as WOTC) and incentives designed to stimulate the creation of new jobs and the hiring of low income and other targeted groups.
- Expand ex-offender reentry and job preparation training programs to encompass more of the offender population through leveraging of grant funds from government, private, and foundation sources.
- Improvements and efficiencies related to outdated and cumbersome state procurement processes and requirements.
- Recommend the utilization of the existing wage data system and common measures reporting to report entered employment, job retention, and average earnings for TANF and food stamp recipients, ex-offender, low income, and other populations targeted for the poverty reduction initiatives.
- Stronger partnerships between economic development and the workforce system to increase use of the system by new and expanding employers to recruit and train workers.
- WIA reauthorization that allows maximum flexibility regarding transfer of funds between programs and use of funds, including Wagner-Peyser.
- WIA reauthorization that includes performance measures related to services provided to employers as an incentive to improve and expand those services.
- Greater percent return on employer FUTA contributions, i.e. higher state allocations for the FUTA-funded Wagner-Peyser labor exchange program.
- Greater development and use of technology to increase access to and use of services.
- The Colorado UI Program needs adequate base-grant funding from USDOL to improve the ability to deliver timely service to customers.
- Stabilize "Stop the Revolving Door" (SRD) Program by:
  - Re-investing a portion of the money the SRD program saves the state by reducing recidivism and placing offenders in viable employment back into the SRD program.
  - The SRD program will pay for itself many times over through recidivism reduction. Reducing recidivism by 10% will save the state millions of dollars.
  - Re-Allocating Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Reserve funds to the SRD program to serve offenders who are TANF eligible.
  - Appropriating funding to CDLE specifically for the SRD program.
- CDLE would like to see a better collaboration/partnership with the Department of Corrections with regards to workforce development and the delivery of employment and training services
- A better partnership and delineation of roles between CDLE and DOC with regards to workforce development and employment services will reduce the duplication of effort and programs.

Access to and Coordination of Public Benefits and Non-Profit/Faith-Based Assistance Subcommittee

> *"No government can love a child, and no policy can substitute for a family's care. But at the same time, government can either support or undermine families as they cope with moral, social and economic stresses of caring for children."* --
> Hillary Rodham Clinton, United States Secretary of State

This subcommittee, co-chaired by Senator Betty Boyd (Senate District 21) and Representative Ken Summers (House District 22), met a total of five times and plans to continue to meet during the "off time" of the interim task force.

Members of the Access to and Coordination of Public Benefits and Non-Profit/Faith-Based Assistance Subcommittee represent a wide spectrum of service delivery systems throughout Colorado, including state and county human service departments, non-profit agencies, foundations, faith-based and community-based organizations. This diverse group agreed to the common goals of 1) identifying best practices, 2) better understanding the issues in order to find solutions to improve our delivery systems, and 3) strengthening collaborations within our state agencies and our community and faith-based organizations.

Definition: The committee agreed to define "access to benefits" as having the up-front knowledge of the services available, understanding the application process, receiving services in timely manner, and knowing the expectations and limitations of the benefits received.

Main Areas for Study:

- **Local Administration:** Colorado has a state-supervised, county-administered system for the traditional social services, including public assistance programs, and child welfare services. Each of the 64 counties has an individual county plan for public assistance and childcare programs and each county has its own human services department. This local-based structure allows for each county to develop individualized programs and maximize partnerships within the community. With such flexibility across the state, part of the challenge in Colorado is ensuring that program information is disseminated consistently across the state and families and individuals know how to access the available services.

- **Diversity of Providers:** There are a large number of groups and organizations that are serving needy Colorado households in some manner. A challenge in Colorado is identifying all of the various services that are available in each county, particularly those being provided by non-profit and faith based organizations. The state lacks comprehensive inventories of faith based services and non-profit programs.

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP):** There was a common concern that the state's food assistance program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), is not reaching a large portion of the people eligible for these critical services. Lack of access to federally funded food assistance programs puts an undue strain on local food banks and faith-based, non-profit organizations as they struggle to keep their food pantries full. It was agreed that if Colorado could better meet the need for SNAP outreach and enrollment, these organizations would be better able to leverage their funding and assist with other essential services, such as transportation and housing.

- **Family Economic Self-Sufficiency:** Awareness of how programs and public policy punish people moving out of poverty as they begin to earn some income through all or nothing assistance is a challenge. The members agreed that Colorado needs policies that would encourage and support people moving out of poverty rather than punishing them for their efforts by reducing benefits when an increase in income occurs.

- **Social Security Benefits:** Subcommittee members identified the service delivery process for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) benefits as all but broken. It can take up to two years to get the benefits and more often than not the applicant must obtain the services of a lawyer to get approval.

- **Securing Required ID's:** Members of the committee addressed the pressing problem many low-income families face in obtaining certified birth certificates and valid state identification cards which are needed to access public benefits, secure affordable housing, obtain employment, register for school, and receive health care. Obtaining certified birth certificates and state identification cards, as required for various public benefits programs, is cost-prohibitive for low-income families and ex-offenders.

- **Systems That Serve and Support:** The state's Colorado Benefits Management System (CBMS) has experienced a number of problems since its inception. A common concern expressed by community-based agencies is the computer system's seemingly random discontinuation of benefits accompanied by confusing notices sent to the participants.

- **Poverty Reduction and Human Services:** The Colorado Department of Human Services, as an organizational member of the subcommittee, has presented to the full task force. According to the department survey (**www.colorado.gov/lcs/povertyreductiontaskforce**), human service programs are designed "primarily as a social safety net" and "economic opportunity and/or a reduction in poverty are underlying outcomes, not goals" of the human service programs.

The 2009 final recommendations from the Access to and Coordination of Public Benefits and Non-Profit/Faith-Based Assistance Subcommittee include:

- Further study is required to determine the local control and flexibility for the deliver of human services programs at the county level. The subcommittee recommends that the task force monitor the current state debate over program centralization.

- Developing a system to identify and track available services. Members agree to develop a cohesive structure that will better coordinate resources, work collaboratively across systems, and streamline service delivery between public and private sectors. Creating ways to make services more visible and easier to access for those in need and who are not familiar with the system is central to any new structure.

- Promote the passage of proposed Bill E, Administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, in an effort to increase participation in the SNAP program, while seeking new funding to staff county offices for the increased outreach and enrollment for SNAP services.

- The committee recommends expanding processes that allow non-profits and faith-based organizations to assist with providing critical human services throughout the state, while supporting county efforts.

- Examination of the New York City model of public assistance delivery that allows participants to build assets, similar to the provisions incorporated in the housing programs. This recommendation supports the desire of this committee to develop more comprehensive prevention and diversion services to better assist families before they find themselves in the position of needing to apply for public assistance programs. It was determined that our systems need to provide increased individualized services to children in families when the parent is not able to succeed due to limitations and illness or when the grandparent is the primary caretaker. Stopping generational poverty is a priority and systems need to be implemented in Colorado to support this goal.

- The SSI/SSDI system needs to be reevaluated first, at the federal level, and then at the state level. The disabled are among the most needy in the Colorado community and desperately need these financial and health insurance benefits in order to survive.

- The committee proposed Bill C, "Reduction in Barriers to Obtaining Identity-Related Documents" to address these and other barriers faced by our families and single youth and adults every day while trying to improve their circumstances.

- It is a recommendation of the committee to keep the task force updated on the CBMS progress made in improving the application process and in resolving the daily implementation issues with our management system.

- Support the staff that works with our families and disadvantaged populations seeking services to allow workers more time with each family and to bring more compassion into the process.

- A need for more navigators and/or case managers at the local level was identified in order to better assist families to negotiate through the system and better access available community services.

- Counties are implementing processes that wrap services around the need of the family in a more comprehensive way. The state needs to find funding and support for these efforts to ensure success and expansion of these innovative services.

- Current federal regulations do not necessarily encourage innovation as the process tends to punish states if their models are as successful as planned. This barrier needs to be eliminated to allow the state and our local communities to design innovative policies and systems that would consolidate resources and streamline services.

- A suggestion made by human services is that the state develops a comprehensive vision statement that would clearly define the overall mission of poverty prevention and incorporate the goal of economic development and poverty reduction into state policies and legislation. This would better support long-term planning and strengthen collaboration between the state level departments.

Scope of the Problem and Metrics of Poverty Subcommittee

*"We've learned a lot about what are common beliefs about poverty here in Colorado and one of those common beliefs about poverty is that it doesn't exist. People have told us 'You can't be poor in Colorado. The safety net is too well constructed for people to be poor here in this abundant state'."—**Colorado State Representative Daniel Kagan, November, 2009***

The Scope of the Problem and Metrics of Poverty in Colorado Subcommittee was co-chaired by Senator Paula Sandoval and Dr. Lisa Piscopo, from the Colorado Children's Campaign. The goal of the subcommittee was to design methodology to measure the success of the task force over the next ten years that would address the complexities of poverty in Colorado. The 13 committee members, representing state, county, non-profit and university advocates agreed that it was important establish an appropriate and accurate metric, or set of metrics, for the committee to use in its evaluation of the success of the task force policies. To create a model for the success of task force policies, the subcommittee first had to review the causes of poverty, the beliefs about poverty, the current measurements of poverty and the intersection between economic opportunity and poverty reduction.

Main Areas for Study:

- Identify specific types of poverty-working poor, debt poor, Federal Poverty Level, National Academy of Sciences measure, self-employed vs. wageworkers, poor without benefits, rural and urban.
- Identify measurement tools for specific types of income, public assistance, wages, and private assistance.
- Identify the variables that contribute to economic opportunity and poverty reduction-transportation, housing, childcare, income, education, health care, social capitol.
- Identify the variables that work against economic opportunity and poverty reduction-social stigma, lack of access to resources, personal choices, systemic barriers.

The Scope of the Problem and Metrics of Poverty subcommittee met four times and heard testimony from data experts all over the state. It was agreed that no current measurement tool could capture all of economic or social determinants that influence a family's ability to make ends meet. It was also agreed that poverty had at least four major scales of measurement and that those scales needed to be considered in evaluation.

The Causes of Poverty: From statewide testimony and expert references the subcommittee proposes that the causes of poverty in Colorado are: barriers to opportunity in economic/financial and government systems, the lack of community resources, exploitation and individual choices. These causes are interdependent, dynamic and fluid. Choices made by the individual are made within the options presented by the community and the interpretation of economic opportunities or barriers presented for that person. The argument over the causes of poverty is analogous to the argument over nature versus nurture. The weight of the impact of one over the other simply cannot be proven.

It is agreed that poverty occurs when community members are not able to negotiate the barriers and/or resources that exist in the larger society. The resulting lack of income for the affected household becomes an economic barrier to that household's ability to pay for basic needs. Those basic needs, as defined by the **Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard**, include; housing and utilities, health care, child care, food, transportation and other items necessary to sustainability.

> "Barriers to self-sufficiency could include limited access to quality education as well as unemployment or underemployment. Similarly, an individual's race, ethnicity, and/or gender, marital status, history of poverty, or where a family lives are factors that could affect self-sufficiency." **(Exploring Poverty, The Denver Foundation, 2008)**

On the other hand, community members who are able to negotiate the barriers and/or resources that exist in the larger society are able to; realize opportunities for economic success, increase income, maintain a household of self-sufficiency and create economic security utilizing asset building. According to Dr. Ruby Payne, author of **Bridges Out of Poverty**, "the continuum from poverty to wealth is the extent to which you *have or can access* the following nine resources:

- FINANCIAL: Having the money to purchase goods and services.
- EMOTIONAL: Being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior. This is an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choices.
- MENTAL: Having the mental abilities and acquired skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal with daily life.
- SPIRITUAL: Believing in divine purpose and guidance.
- PHYSICAL: Having physical health and mobility.
- SUPPORT SYSTEMS: Having friends, family, and backup resources available to access in times of need. These are external resources.
- RELATIONSHIPS/ROLE MODELS: Having frequent access to adult(s) who are appropriate, who are nurturing, and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior.
- KNOWLEDGE OF HIDDEN RULES: Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of a group.
- LANGUAGE: Ability to use formal register, which is the language of work and school, in writing with specific word choice.

(A Framework for Understanding Poverty, Ruby Payne, 2005)

The discussion of poverty as a result of the interdependence of variety of attributes, circumstances, assets and liabilities has led this subcommittee to determine that poverty reduction must happen in a broad context. One size of poverty does not fit all. The potential for moving families out of poverty demands comprehensive strategies that address as many needs as possible. The economic opportunities available to Colorado families will only be as useful as their abilities to negotiate the associated environment. The subcommittee is challenged to go beyond the numbers describing poverty and considers the types of poverty affecting the chances of a family's successful outcome.

Type of Poverty	Conventional Definition & Profile
Situational poverty	1. Period of poverty caused by situational factors. Some of the common factors are: divorce, death of a spouse, unexpected health expenses, and the loss of a job. 2. People in situational poverty are more likely to have private assistance, in the form of family members and supportive people in the community. 3. Many people in the middle classes (250-500% of the Federal Poverty Level) are only a catastrophic accident away from situational poverty. 4. If situational poverty is prolonged, it has a potential to become generational.
Generational poverty	1. A form of entrenched poverty, which can encompass multiple generations of a family. 2. A persistent and long-term struggle that occurs when two or more generations of the same family are living in poverty. 3. Children who live in generational poverty often receive a substandard education because they are forced to move frequently or attend under-funded schools. Since career advancement in the modern economy is often tied to educational attainment, the lack of a college degree sets the generationally poor child up for a lifetime of struggle. 4. Families have either limited or no resources, creating many disadvantages that collectively work in a circular process making it virtually impossible to break the cycle without

	intervention. 5. Occurs when poor people do not have the resources necessary to get out of poverty, such as financial capital, education, or connections.
Deep poverty/homelessness	1. Government safety net programs are essential to these families and many qualify for the Temporary Assistance to Need Families (TANF) program. 2. Households with income below half of the poverty level. 3. Family of four makes do with an income of no more than $11,000 a year. 4. Current census numbers show the highest rate of deep poverty in at least 32 years.
Low-income	1. Measured at 200% of the poverty level 2. Family of four makes do with an income of no more than $44,000 a year. 3. 690,000 Colorado families are considered low-income by recent census numbers 4. About 81% of Colorado children living in low-income households have a parent working part or full time.

The Beliefs about Poverty:

> "If you're willing to work, we're going to find a job for you. We're not going to have them homeless; people are not going to go hungry. The only chance I see of something like that happening is if a person puts himself in that position, and we will always have alternatives for the homeless no matter what." –**Governor Roy Romer, the Denver Post, 1997**

Statewide testimony and expert references propose the following characteristics for families and individuals living in poverty:

Individuals living in poverty have poorer health with the following effects:

- Higher rates of chronic illness, disease and disabilities
- Higher rates of chronic conditions such as hypertension, high cholesterol and high blood pressure
- Lower life expectancies—one study shows 25% lower for low-income individuals
- Less likely to have health insurance and as a result, less likely to visit a doctor

Poorer individuals are more likely to:

- Smoke
- Be overweight or obese
- Abuse alcohol or drugs
- They are also less likely to exercise

- Poverty is associated with lower educational quality and attainment, which in turn affects an individual's ability to participate in the labor market.
- People in poverty are more likely to be unemployed.
- Children from low-income families are less likely to finish high school and less likely to attend college if they do.
- People in poverty are not working at capacity, slowing economic growth and leading to lower tax revenues.

The Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force and the scope and metrics subcommittee acknowledge that there are limitations with regards to the overall view of poverty. Because of the long-term impacts use of a single poverty measure, such as income, distorts the reality of a family's struggle to make ends meet. To meet its goal of poverty reduction over the next ten years, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force will have to consider multiple measures of family economic health. Those measures reflect the cost domains of health care, housing, childcare, food, transportation and the purchase of necessary household goods. The scope and metrics subcommittee proposes that poverty is an incremental part of a family's journey along an economic continuum. Economic opportunity has to acknowledge that there is a high cost to being poor (Appendix VI), address a family's ability to increase income and provide support services required per the family's position along the continuum.

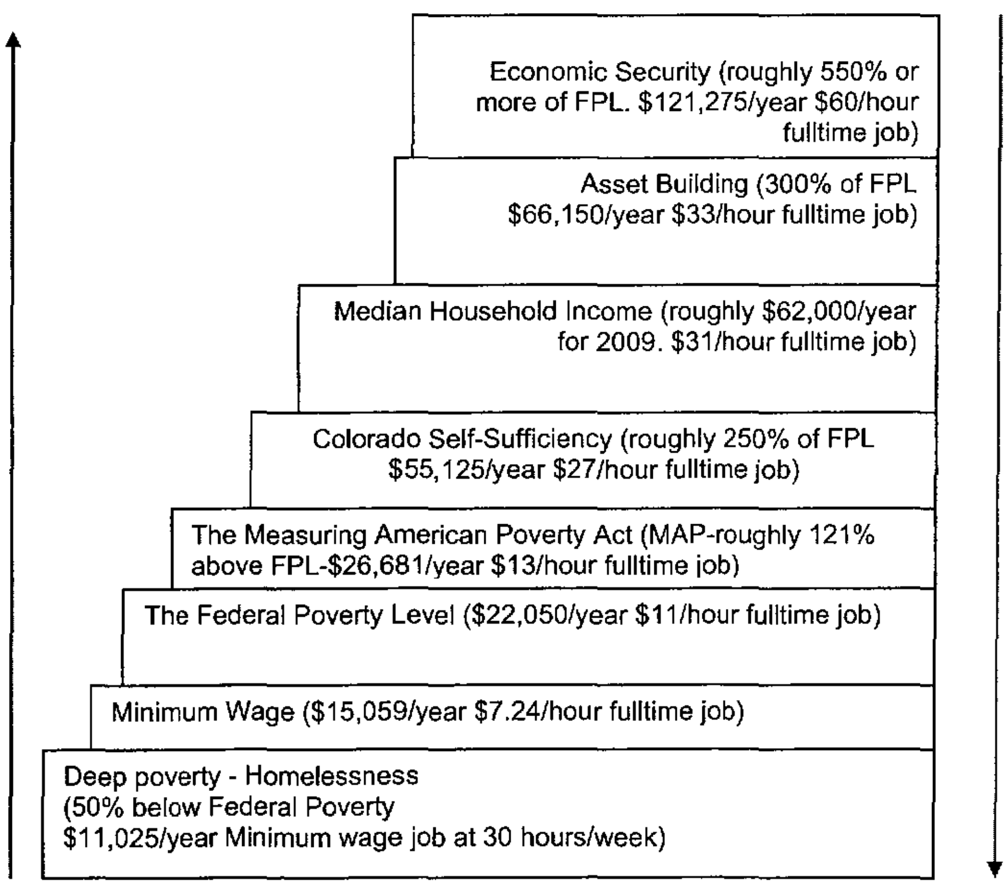
The Current Measurements of Poverty:

Full explanations of the current poverty measurement tools can be found in the final report of the task force published by the Colorado Legislative Council. The website follows:

http://www.colorado.gov/lcs/povertyreductiontaskforce

While poverty is currently defined as living at or below the federal poverty level, the subcommittee acknowledges that a realistic and useful evaluation process requires consideration of an economic continuum. The continuum, demonstrating levels of family economic security connects levels of poverty with levels of economic self-sufficiency and asset building. This is a linear description of income levels and represents only part of the story for struggling families.

Graph Depicting Economic Continuum for Colorado (Assumes household of four persons)



The domains in use by the subcommittee members include, but are not limited to individual and community asset development, such as housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, education and income. These domains are consistent with the Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard and the National Academy of Sciences alternative poverty measure (currently being considered by Congress for official adoption as the Modern American Poverty Act, 2009) and the assumptions of the Asset Building Model. The following table is a comparison of the treatment of the domains by each model and illustrates the benefits of using a more inclusive model for reflecting the budget of the American and/or Colorado household.

Basic Comparison: Three Poverty Measures

	Traditional Federal Poverty Level (FPL)	**Modern American Poverty Act (Updated NAS)/decent living standard**	**Self Sufficiency Standard (SSS)**
Family	☐ Accounts for cost variation by family size and composition ☐ Demographic model of two-parent family with stay at home wife. ☐ Does not distinguish between those families where adults are employed and unemployed ☐ Individuals and families based on the size and number of children	☐ Adjusted for family size, consider economies of scale and special needs of children	☐ Accounts for cost variation by family size, composition and ages of children ☐ Distinguishes between households in which adults are employed and not employed. ☐ Assumes adults work full-time
Housing	☐ Not adjusted for geographic cost variation	☐ Adjusted for geographic cost variation (regional) ☐ Families who own primary residence and do not have mortgages secured by the residence. (unclear)	☐ Adjusted by geographic location (county) ☐ Cost of rent and utilities based on Fair Market Rents
Child/ Dependant Care	☐ N/A	☐ Dependent care expenses deducted from adj. mkt. income for any member of family. Not certain if this includes elderly	☐ Calculated by age, setting and place ☐ Questions about elderly dependent care?

		and child?	
Food	☐ Measure based on single item-food-not on a market basket of basic needs.	☐ Costs for food and food assistance benefit adjusted from the disposable income	☐ Costs estimated by US Dept. of Geographic differences varied.
Transportation	☐ N.A	☐ Necessary work-related transportation expenses deducted from adj. mkt. income for any member of family.	☐ Considers costs involved in public and private (owning and operating a vehicle) transportation. Including geographic variation.
Health Care	☐ N/A	☐ Medical expenses deducted from adj. mkt. income for any member of family.	☐ Considers health care premiums and out of pocket costs, incl. geographic variation in insurance cost.
Taxes and Tax Credit	☐ N/A	☐ To maximum extent poss. Inclusion of state and local taxes and transfers (unclear) ☐ Fed. Tax incl.	☐ Includes the net effects of taxes and credits
Miscellaneous			☐ 10% of all other costs incl. clothing, shoes, diapers, household items, nonprescription meds, and telephone

The 2009 final recommendation from the Scope of the Problem and Poverty Metrics Subcommittee includes:

The subcommittee further acknowledges that there are assumptions with regards to the overall view of poverty. Some of these assumptions are:

- Public benefits "cliffs" are major barriers to families moving out of poverty.
- Generational poverty presents different challenges than situational poverty.
- Families "travel" the economic security continuum within learned parameters.
- Education/job skills training are essential to economic opportunity and security.

- To create an accurate baseline a conceptual model needs to remain fluid and flexible.

Given the assumptions, beliefs, complexities and limitations of poverty measurements, and to ensure a successful evaluation of the task force's goal to increase economic opportunity and reduce poverty, the scope and metrics subcommittee recommends the implementation of a logic model. The logic model can include, but is not limited to the following components.

- INPUTS: These are the resources, contributions, investments that go into a program or initiative.
- OUTPUTS: These are the activities, services, events and products that reach people who participate or who are targeted by the program or initiative.
- OUTCOMES: These are the results or changes for individuals, groups, communities, organizations, communities, or systems that have participated in, or are affected by, the program or initiative.
- ASSUMPTIONS: Acknowledged beliefs evaluators, implementers and designers have about the program, the people involved, as well as, the context and the way we think the program will work.
- EXTERNAL FACTORS: The environment in which the program or initiative exists includes a variety of external factors that interact with and influence the implementation of the program or initiative.

The subcommittee recommends the following criteria questions for the work of the task force over the next ten years.

- Implications for current and future policy; how do we design policy to create economic opportunity and reduce poverty?
- Implication for program implementation; how do we know program implementation is achieving stated policy objectives?
- Best practices based on this model exist in Colorado; what does it take to expand existing programs that work?

Subcommittee members agreed to the proposed model and the proposal of Bill F-amending House Bill 09-1064. The introduction of a unique and inclusive model encompassing a broader perspective of poverty would enhance the future work of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force in the following ways:

- The promotion of economic self-sufficiency as a measure of poverty reduction encourages expanded policies that address multiple aspects of economic opportunity beyond income.

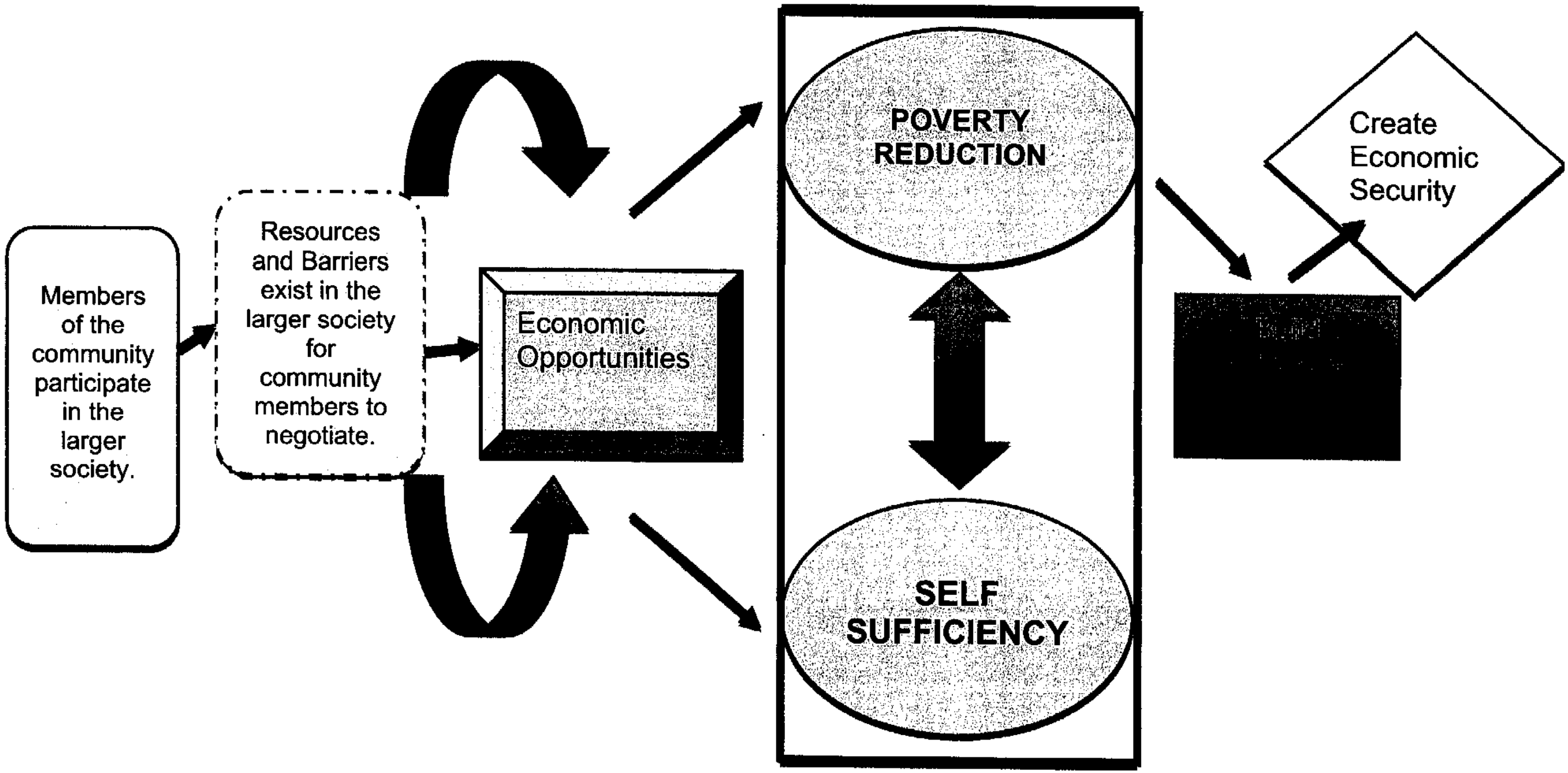
- The recognition of barriers faced by community members encourages the development of "informed" policies that are more reflective of the realities faced by households struggling to make ends meet.

- The understanding that poverty is incremental along the continuum of family economic security encourages the development of initiatives and/or programs that are flexible.

- The understanding that economic opportunity is only sustainable when community members can actively negotiate barriers and resources that would give them access is critical to the implementation of initiatives and/or programs that can reduce poverty.

- Recognizing the "best practice" policies and /or programs in use was essential to the development of the model proposed and graphically displayed below. Expanding these programs will increase the likelihood of success for the task force.

HOW PEOPLE GET OUT OF POVERTY?



Poverty & Education Subcommittee

> "For generations, my family subsisted on menial-wage employment and migrant work. Although we worked hard, we were constantly evicted, hungry, and struggling with poverty. Early on, I learned that education meant stress: the stress of trying to arrive on time; having the right clothing, shoes, and lunch; and completing homework projects. Like others born into generational poverty, I find that thinking of my early educational experiences evokes memories of violence, humiliation, and fear; school became peripheral to my family life and earning a living." –**Donna M. Beegle, Overcoming the Silence of Generational Poverty, 2003**

This sub-committee, chaired by Senator Evie Hudak (Senate District 19), met a total of six times and plans to continue to meet during the "off time" of the interim task force.

Subcommittee members agree and declare that education is a key requirement for getting a good job and getting ahead in society. One of the tasks of the subcommittee was to explore the issues that interfere with low-income and at-risk children succeeding in school and acquiring the skills needed to get a good job.

> The subcommittee acknowledges the dedication and expertise of Colorado's educators and the personnel in the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Department of Higher Education. The Department of Education and Department of Higher Education were very responsive to the survey and additional questions asked by the task force. They are strong partners in efforts to increase economic opportunities for Colorado children and families affected by poverty. Time did not permit the committee to share its recommendations with these departments, so these are preliminary ideas that need to be studied further this upcoming year with department participation and feedback.

Since it was impossible to separate parents' education achievements from the children's, a focus of the subcommittee became the issues around adult and continuing education opportunities for parents and other adults in the community. The subcommittee recognized that the role the parent or guardian plays in the educational and social development of children was critical and must be included.

The state has had a focus in education as a continuum from preschool to age 20 and the governor created the P-20 council to look at education in the state as a single system from preschool through post-secondary education. Thus, it was decided that in order to adequately address the issues connected to poverty and education, the committee would look at education as a continuum from birth through post-secondary education and beyond.

The committee was also charged to look at issues that included school readiness, the achievement gap, family literacy, behavioral problems, English as a second language (ESL), attendance, homelessness, after-school programming, remedial education, and early childhood development.

The Poverty & Education Committee held its third meeting at the ***Cross Community Family Resource Center in Denver*** to encourage parents who live in the community to share their children's educational experiences with us and propose ways for improvement. ***Cross Community Family Resource Center*** is located in a low-income neighborhood, and has an 83% Latino population. The center offers extensive English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for the parents and one of the biggest challenges at a local school (Swansea Elementary) is the rising rate of homelessness and family mobility. The school has homeless liaisons to help with these issues, but there is not enough staff for all of the schools. More help is needed in assisting families to secure stable, safe, and affordable housing.

<u>Main Areas for Study:</u>

- Prevention Efforts /Early Education /Nutrition
- Pre-School /Early Childhood Initiatives and Issues

For every dollar invested in high-quality early education programs, taxpayers save up to seven dollars. This upfront investment reduces the need for remedial and special education, welfare and criminal justice services. Children who participate in these programs are more likely to be financially self-sufficient as adults. (2009 KidsCount in Colorado!, Colorado Children's Campaign)

- Grade School Indicators and Parent Involvement /Neighborhoods
- High School Issues /Truancy /Drop-Out Prevention /Work Place Skills / Work Place Readiness
- Post-Secondary Ed and Vocational Training /Tuition Equity Issues /Support Services
- Adult Education /Continuing Education

The 2009 final recommendations from the Poverty and Education Subcommittee include:

- Promote further study to assess and evaluate effective state and national programs that provide early intervention services for low-income, at-risk families and children, such as the Nurse Home Visitor Program. At the August 18, 2009 full task force meeting, Dr. Ned Calonge, Chief Medical Officer from the Colorado Department of Public Heath and Environment, recommended the state consider expanding the successful Nurse Home Visitor Program to wider populations within the state. Personal home visiting services that connect early on with new mothers during their pregnancies have proven to be very effective in helping low-income parents learn alternative choices for better nutrition and effective parenting techniques. These services have also been effective in modeling ways for parents to interact with their young children to promote optimal cognitive and social development.

- Expand enrollment for the Child Health Insurance Plan+ program for all low-income pregnant women and low-income families with children and to expand school-based clinics in targeted neighborhoods. According to the Colorado Children's Health Insurance 2009 Update, Colorado Health Institute, March 2009, about one in eight children (12.2 percent) in Colorado are uninsured. In addition, more than half (78,230) of the state's 153,288 uninsured children are eligible for CHP+ or Medicaid but are not enrolled. In addition, the infant mortality rate for women without a high school diploma is more than twice that for women with sixteen years or more of education (http://www.cclponline.org/pubfiles/Afm2009Tables_FINAL.pdf).

AA Ensure continued funding for the Colorado Preschool Program and to find ways to expand enrollment with the goal of reaching all of our at-risk children. The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) is available for at-risk three- and four-year-old children and has been very effective in decreasing the achievement gap for low-income children. In 2008, after being in the program for just six months, children in CPP had nearly closed the achievement gap completely in all of the developmental domains, including social-emotional development, cognitive skills, language skills, physical development, and emergent literacy skills. Currently, the CPP only serves 23 percent of eligible children. (Kids Count 2009)

AA Identify and secure additional funding sources to expand Head Start services across the state. Head Start was the pioneer organization in Colorado to first address the issues of poverty and is still one of the most successful another programs available for low-income children. It provides intensive child development and wrap-around services to the whole family.

AA Enhance the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), which provides financial assistance to eligible low-income families who meet individual county guidelines. Without access to CCAP, low-income parents who are working or looking for employment are forced to choose FFN (family, friends and neighbors) for childcare arrangements. Specific recommendations to enhance CCAP include:

- Further evaluate FFN childcare to ensure that all children are receiving quality care in family friendly centers.
- Expand eligibility period for CCAP to conform to the school year, as the Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission is proposing.
- Increase funding to reduce the current waiting lists for these benefits.

AA Expand the School Readiness Quality Improvement Program to serve all eligible providers, which are childcare facilities that feed into Title I low-performing schools.

AA Extend family advocacy services to at-risk children up to the fifth grade. Children who are illiterate after fourth grade have little or no chance to succeed in life.

AA Explore the possibility of mandating full-day kindergarten for all children. Full-day kindergarten is an important option in closing achievement gaps and promoting academic success. A study needs to be completed to assess cost savings and for securing funding for this recommendation.

AA Promote further study of the Closing the Achievement Gap program to determine growth and expansion opportunities across the Colorado. Closing the Achievement Gap has partnered with six school districts that have high minority; low-income populations to reduce the growing gap in the achievement of poor and low-income students compared to their more affluent peers. Participating districts have shown improved CSAP scores, and statistics show that the lowest performing students are making the greatest progress.

- Promote continued and expanded funding of the Even Start Family Literacy Program as an effective program designed to help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy. This program takes a two-generational approach by providing individualized education services to both the adults and children in families who lack the sufficient mastery of English and lack other basic education skills to be successful within the community. The goal of the program is to assist parents to become full partners in the educational development of their young children and to prepare them to better assist children to reach their full potential as life-long learners.

- Further collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to develop a comprehensive statewide plan to reduce dropout rates. According to CDE's presentation to the full Task Force on August 18, 2009, 30 percent of Colorado's students do not graduate from high school and dropout rates among Colorado public schools are higher than the national average.

> "Environmental and familial factors that have shown to influence educational success include the education level of the child's parents, especially the mother's educational attainment. In addition, poverty issues in the early years (lack of proper nutrition, access to health care...) can impact a child's later learning. There are also issues at the school level that are early warnings that students may be headed toward dropping out of school."

- Eliminate out-of-school suspensions. Out-of-school suspensions do not adequately address the situation or help identify underlying problems causing behaviors that lead to suspensions, and this policy may actually promote bad behavior so the student will not have to go to school. It ultimately causes students to drop out, because they miss too much school.

- Increase coordination between high-poverty schools and area workforce centers with the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Programs. This recommendation is to support high schools providing effective planning strategies for students not planning to go on to post-secondary education.

- Support recent legislation, Senate Bill 08-212, Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K), which requires new state standards preparing high school graduates to enter college and/or the workforce.

- Explore effective mentoring programs that could provide homework support at school or at the community center, since many parents are not able to help at-risk students with their homework.

- Increase family advocacy services in high-poverty schools. At-risk students share some common factors that contribute to their poor academic performance: unstable family environment, malnutrition, inadequate health care, unstable housing, absentee parents, etc. Students will not succeed at school if they are wanting of their basic needs and lack a sense of security.

- Create community programs similar to the Harlem Children's Zone. Better coordination needs to occur between service areas and programs to reduce and eliminate the silo effect and complicated application processes. Schools cannot exist as islands in the community so there needs to be better coordination with the rest of the community.

Community includes local businesses, faith based services, other schools, benefit programs, after school programs, food service programs, etc. Model programs for community-oriented schools include the Promise Neighborhoods and the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) located in New York, NY. The HCZ has evolved into a 90-block community in the Harlem area. Funding for the Harlem Children's Zone is approximately 60% private, 30% public, and 10% other sources. The Promise Neighborhood approach would create a school-centered community with a seamless web of services.

The HCZ program includes:

- health care,
- before and after school programs,
- funding from local businesses,
- mentors from local colleges,
- and other programs to create a system of support for students.

- Further study is needed to look at effective Teen Parent Programs across the state.

- Continue to study post-secondary education and vocational training opportunities available in Colorado for disadvantaged populations.

- Expand workforce development and training, adult basic education, ESL, and workplace readiness.

- Target community college outreach efforts to low-income populations in order to provide opportunities for training in emerging careers, such as "green energy."

- Increase current state funding policies for community colleges and other post-secondary education institutions to promote the development of cutting-edge workforce readiness training programs.

- Further study best practices and identify gaps in services to address the need for consistent and comprehensive services available to young adults who are leaving or have exited the state child welfare system.

- Address a major barrier for low-income families seeking more education and training--the lack of affordable childcare or lack of funding for low-income childcare assistance. (CCAP). Currently childcare funding for education activities is not available in all counties due to policies and budget constraints. The Department of Higher Education's survey answers stated that lack of child care and transportation "often prevents or precluded students' ability to participate or to participate at the level of intensity needed to make progress and achieve goals."

- Encourage Colorado Congressional delegation to support the expansion of allowable activities in the TANF reauthorization to include stand-alone education and post-secondary activities, which would promote higher earning potential for our most vulnerable families.

- Ensure the passage of the task force's proposed Bill H — Collaboration in the Provision of Multi-Agency Services. This bill provides a way for counties to eliminate the "silo effect" that exists between programs, agencies, and organizations.

2009 Supplemental Recommendations from the Colorado Department of Education: (APPENDIX VII)

1) Increase awareness about existing adult education/family literacy programs as options and strategies that could provide services to clients rather than start-up or solicitation of new programs.

2) Consider including existing adult education/family literacy programs and/or state Adult Education Family Literacy (AEFL) office as partners in grant proposals.

3) Look for cross-training and shared training opportunities.

4) Collect income information on students whose goals are to decrease dependence on public assistance, obtain employment, and/or improve employment.

5) Five things needed to enhance statewide Adult Literacy Programs are state support (not necessarily limited to funding), improve teacher quality, implement program standards, implement instructional standards, increase intensity and duration, and increase learner support systems.

6) Better coordination is needed with other programs such as TANF, Community Development, public housing, homeless services, refugee services and workforce centers. (Organizations that serve the same target populations - under-educated, unemployed, low-income, limited English proficient adults and families). Increase interaction/discussion of mutual target populations and develop a referral system.

7) Better support services, such as childcare, transportation, pre-employment and occupational training are needed. Lack of such support often prevents or precludes students' ability to participate or to participate at the level of intensity needed to make progress and achieve goals.

8) Ensure positive transitions, better tracking of student progress, and appropriate supports to match students' needs to mitigate the danger points for students in high poverty schools that occur during transitions between elementary, middle and high school.

2009 Supplemental Recommendations from the Colorado Department of Higher Education: (APPENDIX VIII and APPENDIX IX)

1) Increase funding for higher education either through base funding or through financial aid programs.

2) Encourage concurrent college enrollment to high school students.

3) Provide additional fiscal responsibility education to students entering college.

Task Force Legislation 2009

As a result of task force deliberations, the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force recommended eight bills for consideration in the 2010 legislative session.

Bill A — TABOR and the Earned Income Tax Credit
Bill A makes a state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) a first priority Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) refund method. The bill increases the threshold necessary to trigger a temporary income tax rate reduction as a method to provide a TABOR refund so that the rate reduction does not occur unless there is also an earned income tax credit refund.

1 Potential impact: Restores the potential for state EITC payments to low-income working families
2 Target population: Low-income working families that receive, or are eligible to receive, the federal earned income tax credit.
3 Benefit to affected group: Mitigates impacts of poverty when family has more cash in hand.
4 Benefit to local community/economy: Increased economic activity with consumer purchase of basic goods.
5 Benefit to state economy: Potential economic activity of $47 million per year.

Bill B — Clarifying Civil Liability for an Employer Hiring a Person with a Criminal Record
Bill B prohibits information regarding an employee's criminal history from being introduced as evidence against an employer in a civil action regarding negligent hiring practices if:

• the nature of the criminal history does not bear a direct relationship to the facts underlying the cause of action;
• a court order sealed any record of a criminal case or a pardon was issued before the occurrence of the civil action; or
• the record of an arrest or charge did not result in a criminal conviction.

Bill B does not eliminate the requirement for criminal history background checks in hiring for certain employment.

1 Potential impact: Mitigate the barriers to employment for ex-offenders
2 Targeted population: Colorado employers and employees with a criminal record
3 Benefit to affected group: Many employers report that their fear of liability for negligent hiring is the reason why they will not hire a qualified applicant with a criminal conviction, no matter how much time has passed or the nature of the offense. The bill addresses this barrier to employment for former offenders by clarifying the admissibility of an employee's criminal history as evidence in the event of a civil action against an employer. Obtaining employment is the single most important pathway for former offenders to integrate successfully and productively within their community.
4 Benefit to local community/economy: It is conceivable that as many as 960,000 people in Colorado have a criminal record that potentially limits their employment opportunities. By increasing the employment opportunities for people with criminal histories, this group is better able to provide for themselves and their families. In turn, increased employment opportunities may reduce this group's use of public support and stimulate the local economy through their purchase of goods and services.
5 Benefit to state economy: Increasing employment of people with criminal histories can reduce crime, victimization, and potential costs related to prosecution, supervision and/or incarceration. Research consistently demonstrates the link between employment

and recidivism, which currently costs the state millions in corrections costs every year.

Bill C — Reduction in Barriers to Obtaining Identity-Related Documents
Bill C prohibits the state from charging a fee for a certified birth or death record if the applicant is a county department of social services or human services or the applicant has a letter of referral from such a county department. Bill C also prohibits the state from charging a fee for a Colorado identification card to an applicant referred by, or released within the prior six months from, the Department of Corrections, the Division of Youth Corrections, or a county jail. Bill C authorizes a court to grant a name change if a person has previously been convicted of a felony when the court finds specified conditions. The bill directs the court to forward information on the name change to specified departments.

1 Potential impact: Reduce barriers to obtaining identity-related documents for households seeking employment or public assistance.
2 Targeted population: Colorado households eligible for no fee Colorado identification documents.
3 Benefit to affected group: This is a poverty reduction/economic opportunity strategy that increases income to eligible households and job seekers. This strategy removes an economic burden for individuals/families that require public assistance and Colorado identity documentation.
4 Benefit to local community: This is an economic opportunity strategy for the local community. When Colorado households receive income through public assistance or employment, the money they spend on basic goods is absorbed into the local economy.
5 Benefit to state economy: At a minimum, streamlining identification processes is an economic opportunity in savings for the state and for counties distributing services to eligible residents.

Bill D — Independent Evaluation of the Statewide Strategic Use Fund
Bill D authorizes the Department of Human Services to use a portion of existing appropriations to conduct an independent evaluation of the Statewide Strategic Use Fund (SSUF). Pursuant to the bill, the executive director of the Department of Human Services, after consultation with the Strategic Allocation Committee, is authorized to contract with a qualified, independent entity to perform an evidence-based evaluation of the effectiveness of the SSUF in meeting the objectives of the Colorado Works Program, as well as the effectiveness of the individual initiatives and programs supported by the SSUF. Bill D allows the executive director to annually use up to 2 percent of the moneys allocated to the SSUF to contract for the evaluation. The bill requires the executive director to include a copy of the most recent evaluation in his or her annual report to the General Assembly on the SSUF.

1 Potential impact: Improve evaluative measures of state programs.
2 Targeted population: Colorado Department of Human Services and its grantees.
3 Benefit to the affected group: This is a poverty reduction strategy with indirect effects for families struggling to make ends meet.
4 Benefit to local community: This is an indirect long-term economic opportunity strategy.
5 Benefit to state economy: The Colorado Department of Human Services will be in a better position to target the Strategic Use Funds with an evaluative process that identifies how well grantees assist families as they stabilize and move towards economic self-sufficiency.

Bill E — Administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Bill E requires the state Department of Human Services to adopt the maximum certification period allowable pursuant to federal law for the receipt of federal food assistance benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Additionally, Bill E requires the department to develop and implement a state outreach plan with the use of private and federal

moneys to promote access to federal food benefits by eligible persons. The bill requires the department to submit the outreach plan for federal approval by September 1, 2010. The bill exempts the department from developing and implementing the outreach plan if sufficient federal or private moneys are not received. Bill E changes the name of the federal food stamps program to SNAP to reflect the federal name change. The bill also directs the department to implement a program or policy, pursuant to federal law, establishing broad-based categorical eligibility for federal food assistance benefits. At a minimum, the program or policy must remove the asset test for eligibility and increase the gross income test to 200 percent of the federal poverty level pursuant to federal law.

1 Potential impact: Expanded outreach and mitigate the impact of the "cliff effect," for households seeking food assistance.
2 Targeted population: Colorado households living below, at or just above poverty level, who are eligible for food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.
3 Benefit to affected group: This is a poverty reduction strategy that increases income to eligible households and decreases required paperwork, which can be a barrier to many participants.
4 Benefit to local community: This is an economic opportunity strategy for the local community. For every food assistance dollar spent, $1.84 is generated locally-particularly at grocery stores. In rural Colorado, grocery store workers can keep their jobs due to the increased consumer activity.
5 Benefit to state economy: It has been estimated by the USDA that Colorado would gain another $35 million per year in generated income if the other 46% of the eligible population received food stamps. The economic opportunity presented to the state is in the poverty reduction strategy allotted to its qualified residents.

Bill F — Duties of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force
Bill F specifies that the duties of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force include developing a relevant, fluid model for assessing progress toward reducing poverty and increasing economic opportunity in Colorado. Once a model is developed, the task force will recommend that the General Assembly adopt the task force's model for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of certain public programs and policies in achieving the goals of the task force.

1 Potential impact: Colorado will have a comprehensive and valuable tool for measuring economic opportunity and poverty reduction.
2 Target population: Families and individuals who receive public assistance.
3 Benefit to affected group: More effective program development and evaluation will improve service delivery and move targeted households towards economic self-sufficiency.
4 Benefit to local community/economy: In general a family of four that becomes economically self-sufficient saves the local economy $65,000 a year.
5 Benefit to state economy: Multiple communities with households living at self-sufficiency would generate substantial savings to the state economy.

Bill G — Authorization for Public Entities to Enter Voluntary Agreements Affecting Rent on Private Residential Property
The rent control statute in current law prohibits counties and municipalities from enacting any ordinance or resolution that would control rent on private residential property. Bill G clarifies that the rent control statute applies only to private residential housing units. The bill also clarifies that nothing in the rent control statute prohibits or restricts the right of a property owner and public entity from voluntarily entering into and enforcing an agreement that controls rent on a private residential housing unit, whether the agreement is entered into before, on, or after the effective date of the bill. An agreement authorized pursuant to Bill G may specify how long a unit is

subject to its terms, whether or not the subsequent property owners are subject to the agreement, and remedies for early termination agreed to by both parties. Finally, the bill specifies that the rent control statute does not preclude public entities from cooperatively entering into an agreement, nor does it preclude the assignment of rights and remedies to any party to the agreement.

1 Potential impact: Address concerns about the lack of affordable housing for low-income individuals
2 Target population: Counties, municipalities, housing developers, households seeking affordable housing
3 Benefit to affected group: Allowing counties and housing developers to trade tax credits for affordable housing units will increase the inventory of housing for low-income workers and their families while supporting expanded business opportunities at a local level.
4 Benefit to local community/economy: Increasing the inventory of affordable housing units allows low-income workers to live where they work and for many counties/municipalities this means an increase of economic activity.
5 Benefit to state economy: Affordable housing reduces homelessness for the working poor and mitigates the housing burden associated with state programs.

Bill H — Collaboration in the Provision of Multi-Agency Services
Currently, county departments of social services may enter into memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with certain agencies. The MOUs are designed to promote a collaborative system of local-level interagency oversight groups and individualized services and support teams to coordinate and manage the provision of services to children and families who would benefit from integrated multi-agency services. Currently, the following entities may be included in an MOU: local judicial districts; a county, district, or regional health department; a local school district or school districts; community mental health centers; behavioral health organizations; the division of youth corrections; a designated managed service organization for the provision of treatment services for alcohol and drug abuse; and a domestic abuse program. Bill H includes a listing of additional agencies or entities that may also be included in an MOU. The additional agencies or entities that may be included are: community colleges and postsecondary career and technical education colleges or programs; early childhood councils; boards of cooperative services; regional service councils; family resource centers; and workforce centers. Bill H clarifies that if any of these additional agencies or entities are included in the MOU, that agency or entity has the same rights and responsibilities as any other participant in the MOU.

1 Potential impact: Assisting counties as they develop broad-based plans that would directly promote economic development and poverty reduction in their communities.
2 Targeted population: Colorado counties, community colleges, postsecondary career and technical education colleges or programs, early childhood councils, regional service councils, family resource centers, workforce centers and families utilizing services from these agencies.
3 Benefit to affected group: Reducing the agency "silo effect" would support an approach to family economic self-sufficiency for families leaving public assistance.
4 Benefit to local community: Promotes county-level multi-agency collaboration to address the needs of low-income families while potentially reducing the poverty rate for the targeted area.
5 Benefit to state economy: Streamlined public assistance programs that offer comprehensive "wrap around" services for the family have been proven to reduce overall government funding in three areas; lower recidivism rates, less administration/duplication of efforts between programs and increased number of families living at or above economic self-sufficiency.

Common Themes

The Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force was fortunate enough to have three volunteers from the University of Denver Law School support the subcommittee staffing efforts. Those volunteers Elizabeth Dolan, Andrew Flynn, and Suzy Rosen, as well as, Judy Hall, Heather Atkinson and Tracey Stewart noted the following "themes" or topics of discussion that were consistently referred to in many subcommittee meetings. These commonalities were documented as potential areas of concentration when considering strategies for increasing economic opportunity and reducing poverty in Colorado.

Lack of Funding:

One major reoccurring theme for not implementing effective poverty reduction programs is lack of funding. Throughout our counties and across the state, effective pilot programs are not being expanded to meet the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. Solid recommendations have been made by government entities, educators, state departments, non-profit and advocacy organizations, but are not being implemented or fully developed. This report has highlighted many such programs and recommendations.

To simply say, "We can't do it, there is no money" or to say to already overburdened staff, "you need to work smarter" has not produced positive results and is not adequately addressing the critical problems now facing our state. The current national economic crises has only highlighted the need to strengthen the state's safety-net programs and to find better ways to ensure all Coloradans have the same opportunities to live healthy, productive lives.

Subcommittee members acknowledge the following economic challenges:

- Current funding systems and state tax policies.
- Current staff levels are to low meet the rising needs of households seeking public assistance.
- Current structures and fiscal constraints in the Colorado Constitution have a negative impact on the state's capability to adequately fund critical programs and services.

Streamlining Federal Programs:

The ever increasing complexity of our poverty-related federal programs challenge our state's efforts to break down program silos, improve timeliness of service delivery, decrease duplication of effort, leverage our limited funding resources, and complete meaningful evaluations. This barrier was expressed time and again from community-based organizations and state agencies in our subcommittee meetings and the full task force. Colorado is not alone in this assessment. Just one program can easily have hundreds of pages of rules and regulations. Reporting requirements vary greatly between the programs, making it difficult to collaborate on the state and local level or develop cost-effective services. Staff time to determine eligibility and process the services desperately needed by families is burdensome. Staff has little time to coordinate other community-base services and find it difficult to develop solid individualized plans to meet the needs of each child, family or individual.

This program silo effect starts at the federal level with the funding requirements of welfare programs, SNAP (Food Assistance), Medicaid, housing programs, benefit programs for the elderly and disabled, employment and training programs, mental health, criminal justice programs, etc. Each federal agency grants to the state funds that are used to support specific programs. Many of those grants have their own funding restrictions for use. States are compelled to adhere to the prescribed federal policies if they want to continue receiving money. However, these federal restrictions inadvertently create barriers to effective program coordination across departments. This structure is an additional burden for the state and for counties as they attempt implement programs timely and efficiently, with little or no funding for staff and administrative costs.

Rules and regulations are designed to promote the intent and goals of federal programs; however the end product (program) has become too prescriptive, too detailed, and too complicated to operate at a local level. If Colorado is to become a model state for reducing poverty through economic opportunity, it is imperative that we support significant change within the federal bureaucratic system.

Local Level Involvement:

The delivery system for human service programs is state supervised and county administered. This structure allows maximum authority and flexibility to each county for designing and implementing their programs. There are definite pros and cons with this service delivery structure as there are with a state supervised and administered system. A common concern, or observation, expressed by subcommittee members, is the knowledge barrier presented when community-based organizations, advocates, legislators, educators, businesses, etc. want to affect policy and program implementation at the state level. There is no centralized data resource detailing the actual work done on the county level. The process of developing effective state policy must remain dedicated to capture the input of all 64 counties and consider the local perspective to ensure consistency with outcomes.

Connecting the Dots:

Where do we begin? Each subcommittee noted that they, at one point or another in their discussions, they had begun speaking about topics that were overlapping into other subcommittee subject areas. The term "wrap-around services" was used to describe the practice of meeting the needs of the entire family. Many counties have started comprehensive program integration to address the multiple complexities of moving a family towards economic self-sufficiency.

- Getting and keeping a job means having dependable, affordable childcare.
- Hungry children don't do well in school and become adults who not prepared for the workforce.
- Housing is health care; homeless families and individuals suffer from more chronic illnesses than the general population.
- Rural jobs are sometimes two hours away from a livable community and these workers require dependable, affordable transportation.
- Mixed income communities provide expanded social networks and relationship connections for increased resources in income, opportunities, and the development of a social circle.
- "Livable communities" are the first step to breaking the federal program silos between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Family-centered policy includes the recognition of the five cost domains in a household budget.

Policies that connect the dots between earning a living, affordable housing, sustainable child care, dependable transportation, access to healthy foods and equitable health care are policies that can mitigate barriers to economic opportunity and interrupt generational poverty.

Challenges

- The connection between the full task force and the work of each subcommittee needs to be strengthened.
- A broader base of employers and businesses would enhance the connection between economic opportunity and poverty reduction issues.
- Infrastructure that supports statewide participation such as teleconferencing, webinars and videoconferencing needs to be executed.
- Current economic conditions limited the legislation that was considered this year and these financial restraints need to be mitigated in the future if there are to be significant advances in the reduction of poverty.
- This committee needs to be funded as a project, since it will not be an interim committee next year.
- There needs to be continued involvement by all stakeholders focusing on progressively successful outcomes in reducing poverty over the ten year period.

Timeline

January 2010 – January 2011

Month	Milestones
January 2010	First year reports are published assessing the scope of poverty in Colorado
January –May 2010	Promote and potential passage of legislation in the following areas: tax credit, housing, employment, education, evaluation and the proposed model for measuring poverty. Fundraise for 2nd year session. Re-convene advisory group. Recruit replacement task force members.
July 2010	Implementation of legislation that has been signed into law. Re-convene task force and stakeholders for second year session.
July –October 2010	Task force in session; review lessons learned from previous legislative session. Re-evaluate 2nd year recommendations. Develop strategic plan.
October-December	Write, review and publish strategic plan. Set strategies for 2nd year proposed legislation. Outline time frames for proposed long-term recommendations.
January 2011	Submit and implement strategic plan to reduce poverty by 50% in ten years.

Conclusion: Economic Opportunity is Poverty Reduction and Poverty Reduction is Economic Opportunity

Our goal to merge economic opportunity and poverty reduction into one inseparable issue is a process in the making. The age-old "chicken or the egg" question continues to be an influence. To address the complexities of creating opportunity for households in poverty, it is important to remember the systemic barriers that exist for all stakeholders.

- Businesses need employees to be profitable.
- Employees need income and work supports.

Just as economic opportunity and poverty reduction are one in the same, policies implemented to maximize business profits and policies implemented that support excellent employee outcomes are one in the same.

- Businesses need dependable employees for entry level jobs.
- Entry level employees need affordable and stable housing for themselves and/or their families.

Safe, affordable housing is critical to support a stable, low-wage entry level workforce of dependable employees.

- Businesses need focused employees.
- Employees need safe, affordable, dependable child care.

Child care is still the highest cost domain for the family household budget and unstable child care is a distraction (one of the reasons for absences) at the workplace. Affordable, dependable child care is a necessity for a viable, focused workforce.

- Businesses need healthy employees.
- Employees need affordable health care and the ability to take care when they are sick.

The high cost of health care and sick leave are financial struggles business owners face when they consider the need to offer basic benefits. This struggle needs to be weighed against the financial loss business owners face when good employees leave a business for better benefits elsewhere or sick employees come to work, expose others and spread an illness that may put the business at risk.

- Businesses need punctual and consistent employees.
- Employees need reliable transportation.

Transportation is the hidden barrier to employment. Although the perception is that all Americans have a car, a significant number of entry level, low-wage employees rely on public transportation. Limited transportation restricts employee's access to non-traditional jobs with higher paying differentials. Businesses lose access to an expanded labor pool.

- Businesses need financially stable employees.
- Employees need to "make work pay".

Entry level, low-wage employees cannot achieve economic self-sufficiency by income alone. In Colorado the average wage for entry-level employment is $8.50/hour **(State of Working Colorado, 2009)**. However, depending on family size, $8.50/hour will not meet the expense of basic needs for a household, and under most guidelines is considered poverty level. Business owners cannot make a profit if every worker is hired at a self-sufficiency wage. Other resources need to be developed that will either mitigate family expenses or supplement the employee's wages. Some programs already in place include the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program which is designed to support an employee's household when wages aren't enough.

The task before us is to find the balance that supports all stakeholders, employees and employers. It is important to remember that the well cared for employee of one business is the consumer and/or customer of another business. The cycle of economic prosperity can only continue when poverty is reduced to such a level that consumers can spend money.

Acknowledgments

The work of the Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force would not have been possible without the contributions and efforts all dedicated stakeholders. Thank you to the many people and advocates who attended and participated in the full task force and the subcommittee meetings.

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Organizations

9 to 5, Colorado

All Families Deserve A Chance Coalition

Annie E. Casey Foundation

Bohemian Foundation

CBMS Coalition

Center on Law and Social Policy

Colorado Building and Trades Apprenticeship Programs

Colorado Center on Law and Policy

Colorado Children's Campaign

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless

Colorado Community Colleges

Colorado Four-Year Colleges and Universities

Colorado Legislative Council

Colorado State Departments

Colorado Women's Lobby

Community and Interagency Council on Homelessness

County Commissioners

County Human Service Departments

County Workforce Centers

Denver Foundation

Denver Women's Commission

Front Range Economic Strategy Center (FRESC)

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry, Colorado

National Federation of Independent Businesses, Colorado

Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation

Nurse Home Visitor Program, Invest in Kids

United Way of Larimer County

Women's Foundation of Colorado

Suggested Readings

BRIDGES OUT OF POVERTY, Ruby Payne, Kindle, 2006

CONNECTING THE DOTS: GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY AND FAMILY, Peggy Wireman, Transaction Publishers, 2008

SEE POVERTY... BE THE DIFFERENCE! Dr. Donna M. Beegle, Communications Across Barriers Inc., 2007

2009 KIDSCOUNT IN COLORADO, Colorado Children's Campaign

A PROFILE OF THE WORKING POOR, 2007, 2006, 2005, US Department of Labor, Report 1001, 1006,1012,

CHILDHOOD POVERTY IN COLORADO, Lisa Piscopo, PhD, Colorado Children's Campaign May 2009

COMMISSION TO END POVERTY IN MINNESOTA BY 2020, Legislative Report January 2009

DENVER AREA 2009 HOMELESS POINT-IN-TIME KEY FINDINGS, Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, 2009

IMPROVING THE ODDS FOR KIDS, VERMONT CHILD POVERTY COUNCIL, January 2009

STATE GOVERNMENTS AND THE NEW COMMITMENT TO REDUCE POVERTY IN AMERICA; A JOINT REPORT FROM CLASP AND SPOTLIGHT ON POVERTY AND OPPORTUNITY, Jodie Levin-Epstein, April 2008

THE OHIO ANTI-POVERTY TASK FORCE REPORT, April 2009

THE SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FOR COLORADO 2008: A FAMILY NEEDS BUDGET, Dr. Diana Pearce, Colorado Center on Law and Policy, 2008

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APPENDIX I

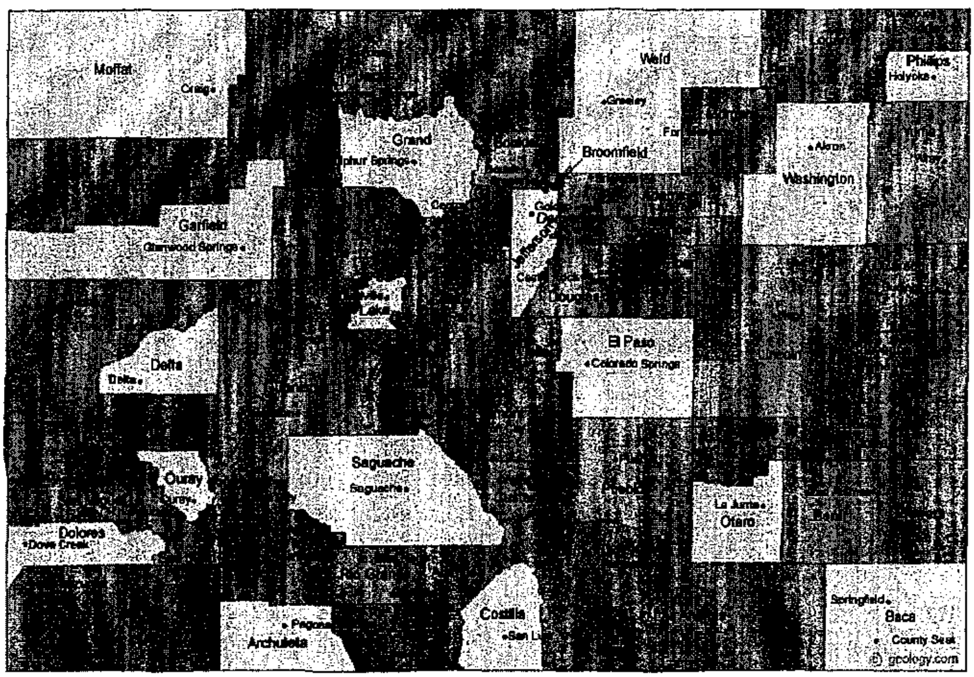
Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force

County Best Practices Subcommittee

--Jean East, University of Denver
--Judy Hall, Economic Opportunity Task Force Coordinator
--Mary Atchison, United Way of Larimer County
--Tracey Stewart, Colorado Center on Law and Policy

Colorado County Best Practices

Summary Report on Poverty Reduction and Expanding Economic Opportunity for Colorado Families



Over 20 counties from around the state of Colorado participated in a phone survey this summer. Many counties had not formally set up groups, but have many programs in place. The following counties were selected because they had started poverty reduction work within their regions. Following are some of the findings that may be of interest to the statewide task force.

Group structure and community action

Adams County:
From Adams County Community and Economic Development: They do not have a poverty task force or a collaborative effort with that focus. They do have a CDBG grant with North Metro, Goodwill, and Human Services focusing on an initiative to assist low- to- medium-sized small businesses get started or stay in business. They also have a Homeless Prevention Sub-Committee, Adams County Youth Initiative, Early Childhood Initiative, and much different collaboration with agencies providing services for children and families. They are hoping to strengthen community collaborations by forming a systematic and strategic workgroup in the future (maybe with ARRA funds).

Delta County:
There is no one group that deals with poverty per se. Poverty is an "accepted" state.
The Area Development group works on increasing economic opportunities in the area.
The HHS staff felt the closest group would be the Community Services Block Grant Advisory Committee. This is a 6 member group, with a Commissioner member, appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. It has specific membership categories and advertises for candidate for 2 year terms each January. Connected also through health department

Denver County:
The Denver City Council and the Mayor's Office has convened a group of citizen representatives to take a broad look at the strategies, programs, and policies that aim to improve the economic prosperity of Denver residents. The Task Force will operate under the following Mission to help guide their work:

> To identify ways in which city agencies, community organizations and the business community can work together to more effectively advance the economic prosperity of Denver residents in the hopes that, by creating new partnerships and placing a higher priority on the importance of improved economic outcomes for all Denver residents, we can expand economic opportunities and strengthen our economy.

El Paso County:
They have no task force specifically but have a lot of good community programs. I was referred to Lynne Telford of Pikes Peak United Way by Beth Rolstad. Lynne talked about their Quality of Life Indicator for Pikes Peak Region. There are 10 partners including housing, education, economy, arts, social well being, transportation, community engagement, promoting good health, safety issues.

Grand County:
No coordinated efforts are happening in Grand County. They are seeing an increase in need for benefits in single males who typically work in tourism (ski industry) in the winter and construction in the summer. Construction is nonexistent, so they are struggling this summer.
Douglas County. Spoke with Douglas County Community Development who told me they are working closely with Castle Rock Economic Development and Parker Economic Development. They are working on a framework for better cooperation and collaboration efforts. They have no focus on issues of poverty

Jefferson County:
The county is really not focusing in terms of a task force on poverty. Jefferson is doing a Senior Study Leadership Program Initiative that is identifying services available and what is lacking for seniors.

Response from Jefferson County Human Services:
Jeffco has been involved on many different fronts to deal with reducing poverty and increasing prosperity and self-sufficiency. I had convened a task force last year of county employees to focus specifically on this issue. We had begun by focusing on data gathering, and a goal of reducing poverty by 75% by 2015. We're DOING, not really planning at this point. Players involved include employees from Work Force, Head Start, Community Assistance, child welfare, TANF, etc. Initiatives currently moving forward:

- Work with the business Community thru Employer of Choice project (where we wrap around services for employees at particular companies to ensure they stay employed - this is a VERY exciting project we're modelling after one started in Michigan)
- Make working w/faith based communities a priority
- Make housing a priority; put a full-time employee on this (also working w/other non-profits and the faith community)
- Make working w/the business community a priority
- Make outreach a priority
- Make working w/dual system clients a priority
- Developing a comprehensive volunteer coordination effort with churches and non-profits partnering with specific business non-profits to enhance WorkForce education offerings (micro-loans)
- We are interested in addressing the fundamental reasons that people wind up in poverty (lack of education, domestic violence etc.) - not just the barriers they encounter (homelessness, hunger, etc.).

Larimer County:
United Way of Larimer County, in collaboration with The Coloradoan, CSU's Center for Public Deliberation, and the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation convened a meeting in October 2007 to begin the design of a county-wide multi-faceted effort to turn around the trend of rapidly increasing poverty in Larimer County. Currently we have eight strategy development teams made up of volunteers, agency, government, business, faith and other types of people. We sought out people with knowledge of the topic they are working on so they can guide us in the development of strategies that are research-based and proven. We also have a Steering Committee made up of about 30 people from across the county. Their role is to advise and assist in bringing all these issues together in a cohesive way.

Mesa County:
Mesa County's task force adopted the model presented at a States Works Conference two years ago from Ruby Payne's "Bridges Out of Poverty". Sue Tuffin, as the Workforce Director, saw signs of a

weakening economy and shared the workshop information within the community. They contracted with AHA consulting and initially trained 27 train-the-trainers who then went out and trained (or did modified workshops) others within the 400 some involved community members. Housing, mental health, school district, colleges, Catholic Outreach, professional within the community, staff and managers of Human Services received training. Clients received a two-week session, "Getting Ahead". The whole community seemed to evolve, bridging gaps, developing a broader base, empowering clients and becoming ever aware of poverty issues that may be the underling cause of poor participation of lack of progress for clients and families in the community.

Mesa created a separate advisory group around this effort and the Workforce is the lead. It is about a 75 member group, including all Human Services agencies within the community, government agencies, employers, faith-based organizations, non-profits, child care community, K-12 schools, community colleges, housing, past and current recipients of services and the working poor are represented.

The Business and Economic Department at Mesa Community College facilitated a community needs assessment and information from that became the framework for RFP's and leveraging TANF reserves. Because of this new coordination, they have developed an additional 43 contracts targeting TANF funds which are addressing more gaps within the service network in the community. These new contract are in addition to the 28 TANF funded contract already in place. Some of the new contracts are with housing, youth, employers, "adopt a block", etc.

Morgan County:
No collaborative efforts in Morgan County.

Rio Blanco County:
They are seeing increased need but have no comprehensive coordinated effort.

Routt County:
The intention is to create an organized group to design and implement solutions to those issues that prevent people from being self-sufficient in Routt County.

Sterling/NE Colorado-Serving Elbert, Lincoln, Logan, Sedgewick, Phillips, Yuma, Washington, Kit Carson, and Cheyenne counties:
Nothing comprehensive is happening in this area. Agencies are working together doing what they normally do. Collaboration is good. Poverty has increased, and they are seeing family members how have moved away are moving back and trying to find jobs where there are none available.

Weld County:
United Way of Weld County—they have projects that focus on one aspect of poverty or another, but have not created any comprehensive effort that incorporates multiple partners and a variety of issues.

<u>Issues to address through collaboration</u>

Denver County:
The task force will review work that has already been done on various issues such as housing and livable wages to incorporate judicious research into this planning and to implement programs and policies that would increase access to economic opportunities for Denver citizens. This is a short list from 2 of the 6 subcommittees set up by the task force.

1. Cliff Effect Solutions
2. Services, Savings, and Costs of Moving from Poverty to Work

3. Denver as advocate for Self Sufficiency Standard
4. Social Entrepreneurship
5. Addressing barriers to public assistance programs
6. Job creation

Larimer County:
We have 12 areas of focus, identified by a community process:

a. Access to Child Care
b. Workforce Development-identifying critical skill sets, access to job training opportunities, support systems to access job training
c. Low income housing
d. Better Jobs-- improving the quality of existing jobs
e. Mentoring to enhance individual and family resources
f. Health care
g. Awareness of diversity and poverty
h. Community awareness of the importance of a focus on the health and well being of children and youth
i. Transportation
j. Increasing academic success
k. Financial justice—encouraging positive banking for low income
l. Financial literacy
m. Public Policy

Once strategies are developed United Way of Larimer County will take the lead on bringing together funding for the initiatives. While United Way will not be the sole funder, they do have seed money to put towards projects. In addition, grants and major gifts will be utilized.

Mesa County:
Focus is to keep modeling "Bridges Out of Poverty" and keep the awareness alive within the community. Focusing on the hunger initiative, food banks and implementing aggressive outreach efforts to get food stamps to families in need.

They are tracking effects of hunger on academic achievement. They have started a program in elementary and middle schools reaching about 900 kids who have inadequate food during the weekend and thus perform poorly the first of each week at school. This new program gives identified kids food sacks to take home to eat during the weekend. They have seen improvements. They are working on back to school back packs and school supplies for fall. These are just some examples of the issues being addressed.

Routt County:
Similar to Larimer. More a matter of people on the brink of affordability of living in Steamboat. Affordable housing, Youth services, health care, child care, etc.—they all revolve around the ability to be self-sufficient and prevent people from falling into poverty.

Summit County:
It's more a matter of people on the brink of affordability of living in the resort areas. Affordable housing and transportation to work are the biggest issues. It all revolves around the ability to be self-sufficient.

Perspective on Poverty

Delta County:
No - poverty an accepted state, area has a "rugged individualism" perspective

Larimer County:
We view poverty as a very complex, multidimensional issue that needs to be addressed on several different levels through a variety of approaches.
Mesa County:

Issues of poverty are multifaceted and takes time to understand it and recognize it. There goal is to end poverty as we know it and make sure all families and individuals have stable, adequate shelter, food, health care, etc.

Routt County:
Not yet.

Stakeholders/Leadership Structure

Denver County:
The task force is comprised of policy makers, business representatives and industry experts who will recommend five transformative, actionable, concrete, and measurable actions that will lead to economic outcomes.

Mesa County:
Department Heads of Gov Agencies, professionals within the community, all non-profits, very inclusive. Different members take turns to facilitate group process. Decisions are made as a whole.

Larimer County:
We have a Steering Committee that oversees, advises, and coordinates. United Way of Larimer County has a staff person dedicated to this effort. Our stakeholders consist of community members from across the spectrum.

Routt County:
United Way of Routt County and DHS of Routt County are primary. We will try to engage the community.

Roles for clients, consumers or affected members of the community

Denver County:
The meetings are open to the public. Interested parties can have access to all the materials and can be part of the on-line open dialog for comments. To be part of this process and have access to all the documents, please go to www.e-Colorado.org. You must sign up and establish your own password in order to participate.

Larimer County:
We have involved clients/consumers on committees and in focus groups. We have found that many consumers do not have the ability to attend regularly scheduled meetings, so have found that focus groups work best for us.

Mesa County:
Clients and affected members of the community are very active with the process and they value the opinions of the constituents. They are why Mesa is doing all of this. Example: Feed back from clients was transportation issues; most have their own vehicle but they break down etc. Started Angels Auto's and has classes on how to maintain their own vehicles. Also have funded free public transportation.

Routt County:
It's too early to tell.

Government Level of Change

Denver County:
Local, state and federal.

Larimer County:
Local and state.

Mesa County:
Local.

Potential Outcomes

Denver County:
Some of the outcomes would include asset building, access to business opportunities, and economic prosperity.

Larimer County:
We are asking our groups to recommend strategies that create systemic change in our Larimer County community, and make recommendations for implementation. United Way of Larimer County, under advisement of our Steering Committee and partners, will take the lead on ensuring that the process begins and following up as needed. We are also developing a Community Assessment Project that will be hosted on Larimer County's web site. This will measure select community-wide indicators over time.

Mesa County:
Assist all to reach the highest level of self-sufficiency as possible. Make sure all have medical and food stamps. Continue to increase heightened level of awareness in community. Hard issue to sell within such a conservative community but it is happening.

Routt County:
Not yet defined.

Metrics used to measure your outcomes

Denver County:
Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard (July 2009)

Eagle County:
Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard (Spring 2008)

Garfield County:
Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard (Spring 2008)

Larimer County:
We use the Community Assessment project that was mentioned above. In addition, we will also be looking at the American Community Survey data to see if the poverty rates in our county decline over time.

Mesa County:
They are basing measures on the County Needs Assessment that was done. Still have child care at 225% of poverty and that is the goal overall.

Pitkin County:
Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard (Spring 2008)

Routt County:
Resort community issues. Timing is good to look at this problem; people will be willing to talk about it.

Summit County:
Colorado Self-Sufficiency Standard (Spring 2008)

Success Stories

Denver County:
Just started implementation.

Larimer County:
We haven't begun to implement yet. We are in our 2nd year of development, and plan to begin implementing some of our strategies over the next 6-12 months.

Mesa County:
"Many, many personal successes and strengthen and expanded partnerships".

Challenges

Delta County:
1. Transportation
2. Mine layoffs
3. Poverty in senior farm workers

Denver County:
Getting the public engaged or involved.

Larimer County:
This work takes a long time and people get tired. Also, our community doubts the reality of the number of people living in poverty. Getting people and organizations to work together and think outside the box.

Mesa County:
Getting a highly conservative right wing community engaged. County commissioners do not attend the meetings and are not very interested or involved.

Routt County:
Things are definitely getting more difficult for folks. No numbers, but those who were able to piece together a living by getting both summer and winter seasonal work are not able to do that now due to lack of construction jobs and also fewer ski industry jobs. They are struggling badly.

Sterling/NE Colorado-Serving Elbert, Lincoln, Logan, Sedgewick, Phillips, Yuma, Washington, Kit Carson, and Cheyenne counties:
Political will to change.

Other comments:
Multiple counties agree with Mesa: "No magic silver bullet. Success takes a lot of hard work and persistence. Help one person, one family at a time. Don't lose sight of needs of K-12 children."

APPENDIX II

To: **The Poverty Reduction Task Force Planning Members**

From: **Mary Atchison (United Way Larimer County), Laurie Harvey (Center for Work and Employment) and Jody Camp (The Women's Foundation of Colorado)**

Date: **May 29, 2009**

Re: **Landscape for Colorado Nonprofit Organizations working in Poverty Reduction**

Our task was to obtain the general landscape of the nonprofit groups working in poverty reduction across the state. We identified three umbrella organizations that work in support of the thousands of nonprofits doing good work in our State.

Suggested areas for future Task Force exploration:

1. Identify all nonprofit organizations in Colorado that are working on poverty reduction to get a baseline of current efforts.
2. Determine how much of these nonprofit budgets are going toward poverty reduction to get a baseline of current efforts.
3. Use the data base (that is created) of nonprofits working in poverty to survey these nonprofits and lend advice to the Task Force.
4. Potential data base: Contract with an organization like GuideStar to buy a statewide nonprofit data base that is coded in issue area and budget of each nonprofit working in poverty reduction.
5. How can the statewide nonprofit organizations working in poverty help implement the recommendations from the Task Force?
6. What is the cost to nonprofit / government programs to aid people living under self-sufficiency in our State?
7. What is the return on investment if we lift these people to self-sufficiency?

We interviewed leadership at each of the three organizations and asked them about their capacity to potentially help the Task Force (if and when applicable) in the future. The results of our findings are as follows:

Colorado 211

Description of Service:

- **Why is there a need for 2-1-1?**
  There are hundreds of toll free numbers in this community, and if you don't have the number in front of you, how do you know where to call? Information and Referral providers began looking for an answer to this problem many years ago. The solution is to have one easy-to-remember number that is universal, that everyone knows to call if they need non-emergency help. The public can call to get help, volunteer or make a meaningful donation.
- **Who operates the 2-1-1 system in Colorado?**
  The Colorado 2-1-1 Collaborative oversees the 2-1-1 system and ensures that it maintains high standards for customer service. This collaborative is available by membership to those organizations and governmental agencies interested in quality provision of Information and Referral services.
- **How does 2-1-1 work with 911?**
  2-1-1 complements 911 by filling the gap between emergencies and non-emergency

requests for items like rent assistance, shelter, food, child care, and more. Several city 9-1-1 programs have working agreements with their local 2-1-1 call center.

- **How 2-1-1 is funded in Colorado?**
  The Colorado 2-1-1 Collaborative holds the position that initial and ongoing funding for 2-1-1 service in Colorado will be through a public/private partnership including federal, state and local government funding streams and United Way, corporate, foundations and other charitable entities and major gifts and endowments.

Capacity of Organization to potentially assist the Task Force Members:

211 has the capacity to provide information to this group in three different ways.

1. They maintain a **database of services and programs** available in various areas across the state that is broken down by type of service provided. For example, they have a list of programs that provide after school programs, rent assistance, utility assistance, etc. This list included non-profit, government, and rarely, a for-profit program. There are thousands of programs listed, and this list is updated annually.

   In addition to the name of the service or agency, information is maintained about the location, hours, any costs to the client, a description of the program, and other important information.

2. 211 gathers **information about the people who call seeking assistance**. This information includes, but is not limited to location of caller's residence/county, gender, language spoken, average monthly income level, age, type of request/need, where they were referred. 211 is able to sort their information about callers by any of these fields.

3. Each 211 call center maintains information on **unmet needs**—those calls where no referral is available in their community, either due to a lack of capacity in an existing service or the fact that a service does not exist.

Colorado Nonprofit Association

The mission of the Colorado Nonprofit Association is to lead, serve and strengthen Colorado nonprofit organizations.

What is the Colorado Nonprofit Association?

- We are a statewide nonprofit membership coalition connecting nonprofits of all sizes, missions and geographic locations.
- We lead the nonprofit sector in influencing public policy and public opinion.
- We serve our members by providing tools for communication, networking and administration.
- We strengthen the nonprofit community through trainings, issue discussions, and public advocacy about the importance of the nonprofit sector.

Why is the Colorado Nonprofits Association needed now?

Today our role has grown even more important as there are over 17,000 charitable nonprofit organizations in our state that represent 6% of our states economy. Given government funding cuts, our health, human services and education nonprofits are quickly becoming the leading providers of social services in Colorado.

These organizations need a strong advocate, not only at the legislative level, but also at the grass roots support level. And, based on the average individual giving to nonprofits in Colorado, we are needed more than ever to help raise awareness of and support for all of our nonprofit organizations that are key to keeping Colorado economically strong and culturally robust.

Is every Colorado nonprofit a member?

Unfortunately, not yet. But they should be. Every new member adds strength to our influence, support to expand our member services, and economic resources to fund our communications with the people of Colorado. Every nonprofit, regardless of size or focus, can not only benefit from membership, but through membership can also help increase both public and private support of its services.

Capacity of Organization to potentially assist the Task Force Members:

Capacity of CNA and things I have learned from Gerry, the membership director at CNA:

- They are able to segment membership based on type of service offered and by budget size.
- But they only have a membership of about 1,300 of the 17,000's of nonprofits in Colorado.

I will ask further questions when I know more specifics of what we might want from them.

Community Resource Center

The Community Resource Center (CRC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides training, technical assistance and consultation to nonprofits and community-based organizations in Colorado and across the country. CRC empowers nonprofits to fulfill their missions by building capacity, strengthening skills, and providing strategies for success. CRC serves as a convener of communities to expand resources and stimulate change. CRC's mission is to create opportunities, tools and strategies to develop nonprofits and community groups to strengthen Colorado.

CRC has worked with thousands of organizations in both urban and rural communities throughout Colorado. The role of CRC is to assist these organizations in addressing a variety of community issues and problems while building a network of partners and supporters throughout the state. CRC has a reputation for tackling difficult issues with its "hands on" practical approach to organizational problem solving and the development of strong and lasting community leadership. The goal of CRC is, in short, to help other organizations fulfill their missions.

Capacity of Organization to potentially assist the Task Force Members:

- 5000-6000 nonprofit organizations in their data base. At this time their database is only sortable by location.
- By September 2009, CRC hopes to have its 5000-6000 records in the data base sortable with NTEE data which will show what the nonprofit has a mission and its activities. They may have the budget of each nonprofit, but right now, it is not the priority.
- Lauren Price with CRC said she would like to learn more about how her organization could be involved with the Task Force moving forward. Her contact information is 303.623.1540 x 17
- At this time, CRC has 5500 people signed onto their Constant Contact. There could be a way to survey people on Constant Contact, but the constituents are not all nonprofit organizations necessarily.

Housing Subcommittee Legislative Recommendations

1. Dedicate a percentage of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenues for a state affordable housing trust fund.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**88.9% (8)**	11.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.11	9
Keep this recommendation, but do not move forward this year.	**62.5% (5)**	37.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.38	8
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.00	0
				Comments	2
				answered question	**17**
				skipped question	**0**

2. Create statute that would require all housing developers to enter into a community benefits agreement prior to breaking ground on a project.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**100.0% (9)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	9
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	33.3% (2)	**66.7% (4)**	0.0% (0)	1.67	6
Remove this recommendation.	**100.0% (1)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	1
				Comments	2
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

3. Amend existing state law to allow land leased by RTD to be developed for residential purposes.					
	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**100.0% (13)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	13
Keep recommendation but do not move forward this year.	0.0% (0)	**100.0% (2)**	0.0% (0)	2.00	2
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	**100.0% (1)**	3.00	1
				Comments	2
				answered question	16
				skipped question	1

4. Amend Colorado property tax law to allow all affordable housing with long-term use restrictions to benefit from property tax exemptions.					
	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**100.0% (6)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	6
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	42.9% (3)	**57.1% (4)**	0.0% (0)	1.57	7
Remove this recommendation.	**66.7% (2)**	0.0% (0)	33.3% (1)	1.67	3
				Comments	2
				answered question	16
				skipped question	1

5. Establish a state housing trust fund to expand the capacity to produce and preserve affordable housing units throughout the state for those in greatest need. Target the majority of funds to persons at 30% or below of area median income (AMI).

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**100.0% (11)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	11
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	40.0% (2)	**60.0% (3)**	0.0% (0)	1.60	5
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.00	0
				Comments	1
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

6. Mandate that energy companies establish a rate structure that will assist low-income individuals and families with keeping energy costs affordable.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**87.5% (7)**	12.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.13	8
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	**50.0% (2)**	**50.0% (2)**	0.0% (0)	1.50	4
Remove this recommendation.	**100.0% (4)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	4
				Comments	3
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

7. Create a tax credit that would be given to a person or corporation that donates land for the purposes of developing affordable housing.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**100.0% (10)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	10
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	40.0% (2)	**60.0% (3)**	0.0% (0)	1.60	5
Remove this recommendation.	**100.0% (1)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	1
				Comments	1
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

8. Redirect interest from fiduciary accounts at real estate closings for an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**100.0% (10)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	10
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	**50.0% (2)**	**50.0% (2)**	0.0% (0)	1.50	4
Remove this recommendation.	**100.0% (2)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	2
				Comments	2
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

9. Provide local governments the flexibility to negotiate developer incentives for rental housing by clairifying through statute that the Telluride court decision does not preclude such voluntary, contractual negotiations.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**93.3% (14)**	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.07	15
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	0.0% (0)	**100.0% (1)**	0.0% (0)	2.00	1
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.00	0
				Comments	1
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

10. Expand the regulation of the Public Utilities Commission to cover the entire state of Colorado.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**55.6% (5)**	11.1% (1)	33.3% (3)	1.78	9
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	20.0% (1)	**60.0% (3)**	20.0% (1)	2.00	5
Remove this recommendation.	**50.0% (1)**	0.0% (0)	**50.0% (1)**	2.00	2
				Comments	1
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

11. Ensure that the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Qualified Allocation Plan, administered by the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, prioritizes projects serving the lowest income households for the longest periods of time, particularly those providing supportive housing for homeless and special needs populations. This includes homeless families, veterans and persons with disabilities.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**90.0% (9)**	10.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.10	10
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	**50.0% (3)**	16.7% (1)	33.3% (2)	1.83	6
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.00	0
				Comments	4
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

12. Create statutory language that requires Colorado Public Housing Authorities to create a uniform public complaint process and a global reasonable accommodation form.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**75.0% (9)**	25.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.25	12
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	33.3% (1)	**66.7% (2)**	0.0% (0)	1.67	3
Remove this recommendation.	**100.0% (1)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	1
				Comments	3
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

13. Create a legislative committee that would be charged with specifically studying issues related to housing people with disabilities.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**62.5% (5)**	25.0% (2)	12.5% (1)	1.50	8
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	**57.1% (4)**	42.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.43	7
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	**100.0% (1)**	0.0% (0)	2.00	1
				Comments	1
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

14. Create a state exemption prohibiting landlords from considering credit problems acquired during the first five-years after acquiring a disability or any medical debt.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**80.0% (4)**	20.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.20	5
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	**60.0% (3)**	40.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	1.40	5
Remove this recommendation.	**66.7% (4)**	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	1.50	6
				Comments	2
				answered question	**16**
				skipped question	**1**

15. Change the asset requirement in Medicaid statute to allow a homeowner or life partner/spouse of a homeowner to have one savings account with up to $10,000 to be used for home repairs only. Change the definition of homemaker services to include outside work such as raking or lawnmowing. Remove the word "light" from housekeeping so that people with no able bodied adult in the home can conduct deep cleaning of the home.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	83.3% (10)	16.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	1.17	12
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	75.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	25.0% (1)	1.50	4
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.00	0
				Comments	1
				answered question	16
				skipped question	1

16. Recommend that all child welfare and juvenile justice system youth exit/discharge plans identify safe and stable housing appropriate to the needs of the young person prior to exit (the homeless youth shelter and transitional housing system is intended for non-systems youth) and that at least 12 months of follow up services be offered to youth who recently transitioned out of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems including case management, on-going life skills classes, access to volunteer mentors/life coaches, as well as referrals to developmentally appropriate and accessible support services such as mental health, substance abuse, education, and vocational training.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**100.0% (14)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	14
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	**100.0% (1)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	1
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.00	0
				Comments	1
				answered question	15
				skipped question	2

17. Recommend that the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections (DYC) ensure that all youth transitioning from placement to independent living situations be provided their state issued photo identification, social security card, and birth certificate prior to discharge.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	**100.0% (14)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	14
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	**100.0% (1)**	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1.00	1
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.00	0
				Comments	2
				answered question	15
				skipped question	2

18. Recommend amending the Homeless Youth Act to more closely align with the federal Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act of 2008 so that federally funded homeless youth shelters are able to serve homeless and runaway youth for up to 21 days instead of the current requirement for Colorado licensed homeless youth shelter stays not to exceed two weeks. The Office of Homeless Youth Services is working with the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Childcare Licensing to amend the Homeless Youth Shelter licensing requirements to allow for 21 days of shelter for homeless youth and to allow for alternative homeless youth shelter models, such as host home shelter beds, which are ideal for rural communities due to the highly flexible and cost effective nature.

	High Priority	Low Priority	No Priority	Rating Average	Response Count
Move this recommendation forward this year.	92.3% (12)	7.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.08	13
Keep this recommendation but do not move forward this year.	50.0% (1)	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	1.50	2
Remove this recommendation.	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.00	0
				Comments	2
				answered question	15
				skipped question	2

APPENDIX IV

Successful Employment and Training Programs

Report from Successful Programs Subcommittee
September 17, 2009
Economic Opportunity and Poverty Reduction Task Force
Economic Development & Job Creation with Sustainable Income and Work Supports

Our task was to provide examples of "what is out there and how it translates to actual success or progress" in reducing poverty. The subcommittee of Mary Russell and Matt Van Auken compiled a short list of local, state, and national initiatives that have had an impact or success in addressing poverty through job creation and economic development. Some of these initiatives have tenure, others are relatively new.

Local initiative or programs

Arrupe Jesuit High School is located in northwest Denver at 4343 Utica Street and designed primarily to serve the economically disadvantaged in the city of Denver. The Corporate Work-Study Program is an integral part of an Arrupe education. One full-time, entry-level office job supports a team of four students. The cost is $20,000 for the school year and assists the students while they work at the company or organization. Arrupe handles all employment issues such as Workers' Compensation, Social Security, Medicare and tax withholding. Each student works one full day a week, five full days a month to help cover 70% of his/her tuition. The remaining four days of the week the student attends classes. Arrupe will administer the program as well as provide training and feedback for the students. Arrupe will also provide transportation to and from the work site. Among the companies participating, Ehrhardt Keefe Steiner & Hottman PC , CitiBanks, CoBANK, Colorado Business Bank, U.S. Bank, Aspect Energy, EnCana Oil & Gas (USA), Inc. Resolute Natural Resources Company, Xcel Energy, CH2M HILL, United Launch Alliance, Janus Capital, Wells Fargo Brokerage Services, Newmont Mining, Denver Health, Goldsmith Center Veterinary Clinic, Exempla Saint Joseph Hospital, Brass Smith Innovations, Fleet Car Carriers, ICM Corporation, JR Butler, 15 legal firms, Leprino Foods, Chipotle Mexican Grill, Ready Foods, etc.

The Colorado Workforce Development system serves more 250,000 citizens each year and provides training for nearly 11,000 of them. In addition, the WIA system infused over $40 million into regional economies to increase education, training, and employment opportunities. The system continues to expand its reach and stands ready to serve Colorado workers. Services to employers include work opportunity tax credits, work training experience (internships), and on-the-job training, that are no-cost or low cost options for creating jobs.

BAYAUD Enterprises provides employment services to individuals with mental, emotional, physical, and economic challenges. Since 1969, Bayaud has served more than 5,000 individuals, providing vocational assessment, training services and employment opportunities. Last year they provided job placement services to 325 homeless individuals and 115 disabled individuals.

CWEE: Center for Work Education & Employment was founded in 1982 and modeled after NWEE (National Women's Employment and Education). NWEE was formed in San Antonio, Texas in 1973 after several hundred welfare recipients marched to the Texas Welfare Department to return their welfare checks and demand jobs. Today CWEE continues to prepare single parents and families for long-term, meaningful employment, enabling them to achieve self-sufficiency and end their dependency on welfare. CWEE's job preparation classes included GED classes, Basic Skills refresher courses, Job Readiness classes: communication skills, time management, self-esteem, family budgeting, Skill Development classes: Windows, Microsoft Word, Access, Excel and Power Point, customer service workshop, business writing , Job Search preparation: how to write a resume and cover letter, interviewing skills.

DenverWorks is a faith-based nonprofit whose mission is to empower jobseekers to fulfill their God-given design through preparation for employment. For 14 years we have been providing jobseeker workshops, job search assistance, career counseling, work attire, computer accessibility, mentoring, and life-skills training to jobseekers with barriers to employment. The 2nd Chance program provides employment assistance to the prisoner reentry population. The entry point into the program is the former offender workshop. Topics for the workshop include job search strategies for former offenders, tips on responding to difficult interview questions, and an introduction to industries and employers who are felon-friendly. 2nd Chance offers job leads clothing, computer lab access, mentoring opportunities, and other assistance based on individual needs and qualifying criteria. DenverWorks' computer lab is available for jobseekers on a drop-in basis. Volunteers may assist users with e-mail accounts, resumes, keyboard tutorials, and online applications

Goodwill Industries is a 90-year old organization dedicated to ensuring "that every person in the community has the opportunity to live to his or her potential and to attain personal and economic self-sufficiency." Goodwill believes in the power of work as a means to self-sufficiency and a transformational element in the lives of the more than 23,000 people served each year. Goodwill promotes sustainable change throughout the community and supports a growing economy through a model that provides education, training and opportunities to help the working poor, people moving from welfare to work, and disabled adults attain true self-sufficiency. Goodwill serves as a link between the education and business communities by providing intensive, classroom-based career development services to more than 20,000 students in 29 area schools. These programs help students stay in school, graduate and prepare for post-secondary education or immediate entry into the workplace following graduation. Goodwill's youth programs are proactive, preventative programs designed to help teens establish real-world connections between education, career development and the local business community.

Women's Bean Project is a nonprofit organization helping women break the cycle of poverty and unemployment. The teach job readiness and life skills for entry-level jobs through employment in our gourmet food production business. Women come with the goal of transforming their lives and moving toward self sufficiency Jossy Eyre founded the Women's Bean Project in 1989 as a result of her volunteer work at a day shelter for homeless women. Eyre saw that while the shelter kept women safe, if could not help them make lasting changes in their lives. Eyre bought $500 worth of beans and put two homeless women to work - the first step in building the social enterprise we are today. Our training opportunities have expanded dramatically over the years, and annual operating budget has grown from $6,100 to over $1.5 million. In 1993, King Soopers became the first grocery store to carry our products. Today their product offerings have expanded to salsa mixes, spice rubs, coffee beans, and jelly beans in addition to our soups and chili, along with gift baskets, baking mixes and much more.

Work Options for Women is a highly successful culinary training, support services, and job placement program for poor and marginalized women to gain the confidence and skills needed to become gainfully and permanently employed in the food service industry. The heart of the program is 16 weeks of hands-on training, working side-by-side with professional chef instructors to prepare hundreds of meals each day in WOW's commercial kitchen and cafeteria for Denver city employees. Also during that time, case managers work individually with students to address specific issues which are barriers to employment, such as homelessness, transportation or affordable childcare. WOW staff then helps with job placement, coaching students through the application and interview process.

STRIDE was formed in 1991 and that year served 50 families in partnership with the Arvada, Jefferson County, and Lakewood Housing Authorities. It now serves almost 300 families each year and has added partnerships with the Aurora and Arapahoe Housing Authorities as well as programs that serve recently homeless families.
From its inception, Stride has focused on individualized case management services to help families become self-sufficient. Now, Stride also offers homeownership programs, financial literacy classes, and Individual Development Accounts (IDA's) to help families build assets, tutoring and support of after school programs for the children of their participants, and free, refurbished computers to parents that need them to find work or advance in their careers.

Mi Casa Resource Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1976 to advance the economic success of Latino families. Mi Casa's offerings are extensive. Career development programs include Pre-Apprenticeship Program to construction and energy industry jobs; Financial Services to prepare bilingual bank tellers for the financial industry and other financial services frontline positions as well as Health Support training to prepare bilingual individuals for careers in the healthcare industry. Their Business Development services include a Small

Business Development program, business consulting, networking events and mentoring circles. Through the Youth and Family Development division, they have the MiCasa After School Program offered at Lake Middle School, Leadership for Community Change for youth ages 11-25, and adult education classes including ESL, Adult Basic Education, GED, financial literacy, life skills.

iCAST (International Center for Appropriate & Sustainable Technology) is a not-for-profit organization based in Lakewood, Colorado. iCAST started as an initiative at the Engineering College at the University of Colorado at Boulder. iCAST works with local partners to develop sustainable solutions to the infrastructure and economic development needs of underserved rural communities. iCAST's mission is to promote sustainable development using a triple-bottom-line approach that promotes environmental health, economic viability and social responsibility. iCAST projects are designed to encourage self-sufficiency based on the development, application and commercialization of appropriate and sustainable technologies. In 2008, iCAST received a Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant to develop and deliver curriculum that prepares the unemployed or underemployed, skilled or unskilled with knowledge of the technologies, terminology, and processes essential to compete for jobs in the energy auditing and energy efficiency arena. More than 200 people have received training.

Humanitarian Engineering is a program at Colorado School Mines to help reduce poverty through a balance of technical excellence, economic feasibility, ethical maturity and cultural sensitivity. Mines to design under constraints to directly improve the wellbeing of underserved populations. Through work study or internships, students design under constraints to directly improve the wellbeing of underserved populations.

Family Resource Centers address and meet the need for decreasing poverty and increasing job retention. There are 24 Family Resource Centers that serve 42 counties throughout the state of Colorado. They have an existing infrastructure with deep collaborative relationships that benefit about 70,000 low-income families. Information/referral services, educational opportunities, low-income housing, low-cost public health insurance, subsidized childcare, etc. are all beneficial with supporting families to gain & retain employment. It also helps them with moving off of public assistance and out of poverty. Family Resource Centers also coordinate with a multitude of other agencies that deal with issues, such as probation/judicial, employment, mental health, substance abuse, etc. Coordination of comprehensive services, to include prevention services, should be a part of the continuum of services for families, children and youth. Many directors and staff have been trained in the Bridges Out of Poverty curriculum to be able to work closely with individuals and families.

Colorado Department of Labor and Employment offers two successful offender employment and training programs. One is called "Stop the Revolving Door" and the other is the Motherhood Program. The SRD is a national model and has been recognized as one of the best programs in the US for training, employing and placing offenders in employment, as well as reducing recidivism.

Human Services Workforce Initiative

This Casey Foundation Initiative was the first national effort created to address the urgent need to recruit and retain human services workers who have the appropriate training and support to make crucial decisions that affect the most disadvantaged kids and families in the nation. In 2005, the Cornerstone Consulting Group assumed leadership of the initiative from the Casey Foundation, developing a not-for-profit organization, Cornerstones for Kids, to house and manage the project. The initiative defines the "human services workforce" as the frontline staff in child welfare, juvenile justice, child care, youth development, and employment services. Learn more about this initiative and Cornerstones for Kids.

Accelerate Colorado advocates for federal support beneficial to Colorado's business community and to the state's economy. They work with key members of Congress and other select leaders on issues critical to Colorado's economic development, especially in the areas of aerospace and defense, bioscience, health care, renewable energy, transportation and the construction of a new Veterans Administration Hospital.

Triple Bottom Line Companies

The term triple bottom line (TBL), also known as "people, planet, profit," was coined by John Elkington in 1994 to describe an expanded spectrum of values and criteria for measuring organization and societal success. The concept of TBL demands that a company's responsibility be to stakeholders rather than shareholders. In this case, "stakeholders" refers to anyone who is influenced, either directly or indirectly, by the actions of the firm. According to the stakeholder theory, the business entity should be used as a vehicle for coordinating stakeholder interests, instead of maximizing shareholder (owner) profit. When business and societal interests overlap, everyone wins. A component of TBL is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which is defined as the commitment of business to contribute to sustainable economic development, working with employees, their families, the local community and society at large to improve the quality of life of all stakeholders.

Increasingly, businesses are expected to find ways to be part of the solution to the world's environmental and social problems. The best companies are finding ways to turn this responsibility into opportunity. In practical terms, triple bottom line accounting means expanding the traditional reporting framework to take into account ecological and social performance in addition to financial performance. Many companies are beginning to put sustainability and triple bottom line language into their articles of incorporation and bylaws.

The following are examples of businesses across the state and the nation who have embraced triple bottom line theory and are making a difference in their community.

In June 2009, Colorado Biz Magazine published a list of 50 Colorado companies that are building tomorrow's economy. The opening line of the article says, "However many billions the federal government pumps into the economy, one truth rings clear: It will be business that will lift the country out of the doldrums and thrust it forward into the 21st century." The following are some that demonstrate commitment to corporate responsibility.

Big Agnes is a Steamboat Springs company founded in 2000. Its employees produce camping equipment. The company uses 100 percent wind-generated power in its offices and warehouse. The company encourages bicycle and car pool commuting and offers paid time off after target commuting days are met. The company is expanding is expanding its use of recycle materials to help divert landfill waste.

Colorado Millis is an all-natural oilseed processing plant that has Kosher and organic certification. The Lamar-based company processes sunflowers from which the oil is sold primarily into the snack food market. It operates a zero waste plant.

Danielson Designs LTD in Trinidad creates home décor products, including picture frames and decorative designs. It is one of the largest employers in Las Animas County. The Danielson family founded the company to bring jobs to economically depressed Trinidad.

The **Evolve** Company in Englewood designs and produces customized branded apparel and merchandise. Their founder, Joel Wochner, is committed to the triple bottom line – profitability, sustainable practices and social responsibility.

JG Management, based in Grand junction, offers program and project management, and engineering design and analysis services to government and private sector clients nationwide. The company donates 5 percent of its net income each year to nonprofits and projects, as well as giving each employee 40 paid hours to pursue volunteer work of their choice. The company funded the development of the Riverside Educational Center which provides qualifying K-12th grade students facing academic and financial challenges a no-cost, after school tutoring and enrichment program. In only its third year, the program serves more than 100 mostly Latino students.

Namaste Solar in Boulder works in Colorado to propagate the responsible use of solar energy and to pioneer conscientious business practices. It is Colorado's number 1 solar company with a 25 percent market share and more in-state installations than any other company. Namaste Solar collaborated with the Center for Resource Conservation to install a 10.5kW solar PV system on the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless to help reduce its operating expenses. The shelter plays a vital role in the community by providing overnight shelter and more than 50,000 hot meals to over 1,000 different individuals. Namaste Solar collaborated with the Center for Resource Conservation to install a 10.5kW solar PV system on the shelter to help reduce its operating expenses. Funding for the project was donated by the Renewable Energy Trust and Namaste Solar.

Pangea organics in Boulder is the largest cold-processed organic bar soap manufacturer in the US. Founder Joshua Onysko saw the selling of the highest quality organic, personal care products as a means to a greater end – that end being social sustainability. A generous portion of their profits fund the Pangea Institute, a nonprofit dedicated to researching and teaching all aspects of sustainable living and business practices.

Ridgeviewtel, LLC establishes and provides next-generation connectivity and defined broadband services for communities at affordable prices. The company's mission is to provide every person, no matter what their address, access to the Internet. It works with local municipalities to secure funding for wireless networks and provide solutions for residents and business owners in underserved areas.

Triple Bottom Line companies across the nation

Cascade Engineering's owner, Fred Keller decided to help reduce poverty in his Grand Rapids community by hiring poor people--and he made this a mission of his company. The challenges were significant and the results remarkable, not only for the people in poverty but for all his employees. His story inspired a similar effort in northwest Michigan called "TeamWork Northwest." **Keller says,** Cascade has pioneered various programs over the years that positively impact society and benefit our company at the same time. Programs such as Welfare to Career and Re-Entry Employment Resource Center have been a tremendous asset in helping the greater community and in allowing our internal culture to embrace diversity and support people with respect and dignity. At Cascade Engineering we believe that simply taking care of our own business is no longer sufficient, but rather we must address the component of taking care of the greater good. From the beginning, our purpose has always been to demonstrate how sustainability can be a powerful vehicle for societal change and have a clear business purpose as well."

Nau is an outdoor apparel company in Oregon committed to "inspiring and affecting positive change through a holistic approach to design." Even before Nau had raised any money to fund its efforts or had designed a single product, the team began to examine how to set the company on a deliberate social and environmental trajectory. Their corporate bylaws state "duty of directors shall be to make money for shareholders but not at the expense of the environment, human rights, public health and safety, dignity of employees, and the welfare of the community in which a company operates."

Great Lakes Brewing Company is an environmentally and socially conscious brewer of award-winning, all natural beer. The Cleveland based company has a commitment to the community and environment by: reducing, reusing and recycling; changing natural resource use from "Take, Make, Waste" to "Take, Make, Remake"; implementing efficient energy practices; investing in the community through non-profit organizations; supporting sustainable urban renewal projects.

The Southwest Organization Unifying Resources for our Community and Employees (SOURCE) in Grand Rapids Michigan is a collaborative effort involving private sixteen businesses, government agencies, and not-for-profits creating more positive workplace and home environments to help make a better community in which to live and work. The SOURCE is a not-for-profit employee support organization designed to help employees keep their jobs, receive training to enhance their employment, and help employees move into better positions within or across companies. For the employees and families of its member companies, The SOURCE offers on-site Department of Human Services caseworkers to solve various employment and home-related problems and to manage family cases. They also offer training space for work-based and community classes and relationships with many of the area's best resources to resolve employee and family issues.

The National Career Readiness System Benefits Economic Development Efforts

Establishing strategies that create jobs and raise wage rates is the primary mission of economic development. Information generated by adopting the National Career Readiness System helps states and regions fulfill this mission by:

- Documenting workforce quality for relocating and expanding businesses.
- Providing local businesses with a better-trained workforce.
- Helping employers plan and address existing and future employment needs.

A growing number of states, communities, and organizations are choosing the WorkKeys® system as the foundation for career readiness initiatives that energize their economic development and workforce strategies. Many of these initiatives incorporate the principles of the Certificate by issuing state and local credentials that align with the national system.

Credentials that utilize three WorkKeys assessments—Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information—share many of the benefits provided by the National Career Readiness System. State and regional programs that use this framework can achieve even greater outcomes by fully adopting the National Career Readiness Certificate as part of comprehensive workforce and economic development strategies. Broad use of WorkKeys to power state, regional, and local strategies demonstrates its capability to address a wide range of workforce and economic development objectives. A Career Readiness Certificate can be used for:

- Screening—Employers interview only applicants who have the skills required for the job.
- Hiring and promotion—A National Career Readiness Certificate can be used as a "plus" factor to help make selection and promotion decisions.
- Targeting employee training and development—Employers can target their training budgets for job-specific skills rather than basic skills.

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force
Colorado Department Labor & Employment Follow-Up Questions
September 2009

1) For each program identified in the department survey, what are the top three ideas that could supplement or assist this program to provide economic opportunity and reduce poverty – in the short-term at little or no cost, and in the long-term? Consider federal, state and county level changes that could advance best practices, enhance program effectiveness, improve collaborations and save public dollars.

1. Strengthen the relationships between human services and workforce agencies at the state and local level to achieve a model for poverty diversion. Focus this effort on industry sector strategies that involve career readiness assessments and development of curriculum designed to prepare low-skilled, low-income for in-demand jobs
2. Strengthen the partnership between workforce and the Department of Education's dropout prevention programs to achieve a model that involves workforce readiness assessments and preparation within dropout prevention strategies
3. Make permanent the WIA summer youth program through leveraging of federal, state, and local funds, and target it to in-school youth at risk of dropout
4. Promote the use of occupational and industry profiling to determine the skills needs of employers for new and evolving jobs to link the employer community to the poverty reduction initiative
5. Strengthen the relationships among the community colleges, economic development and workforce to leverage training dollars and resources for a focus on industry sector and layoff aversion training strategies
6. Package and promote all the types of state and Federal tax credits (such as WOTC) and incentives designed to stimulate the creation of new jobs and the hiring of low income and other targeted groups
7. Expand ex-offender reentry and job preparation training programs to encompass more of the offender population through leveraging of grant funds from government, private, and foundation sources
8. Improvements and efficiencies related to outdated and cumbersome state procurement processes and requirements

2) How do you measure success for each program identified in the department survey, in terms of reducing poverty and advancing self-sufficiency in Colorado? What performance measures do you use? What prevents you from evaluating this program in ways that would tell us the impact of these services on poverty reduction? What can you recommend?

1. Adult programs (including WIA, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, and Veterans) utilize the common measures entered employment, employment retention, and average wage as performance measures. WIA Youth programs use placement in education or employment, completion of educational and vocational certificates and degrees, and literacy/numeracy gains, as well as work readiness gains for the WIA summer youth employment program. The Ex-offender grants include recidivism rates, employment and average wage as performance measures.

2. Recommend the utilization of the existing wage data system and common measures reporting to report entered employment, job retention, and average earnings for TANF and food stamp recipients, ex-offender, low income, and other populations targeted for the poverty reduction initiatives
3. Recommend developing a cross-walk between Department of Human Services and Department of Labor data (including new hire data) that demonstrates reduction of unemployment, TANF, etc. payments, and therefore the cost savings, resulting from participation in existing programs or the models proposed above.
4. The Colorado UI Program utilizes USDOL's Core Measures, which includes specific performance measures for Benefits, Overpayments, and Appeals, and a focus on the accuracy and timeliness of customer payment processing to ensure that claimants receive their benefits in a timely manner, and reduce the possibility of overpayments.
5. UI Reemployment Services (RES), a collaborative program between the Workforce Development and Unemployment Insurance Programs, measure success by the percentage of participants who enter employment before they exhaust their UI benefits (i.e. enter employment by the end of the 2nd quarter following the quarter they receive their first benefit payment).

<u>Specific Program Questions</u>

Employment Service (Wagner-Peyser)

1) What are the top five barriers a job seeker faces in obtaining full time employment with a sustainable income?
    a. Lack of skills and/or current and successful work history
    b. Lack of diploma, GED, or post secondary vocational certificates
    c. Lack of knowledge regarding job search strategies
    d. Lack of knowledge or unrealistic expectations regarding employer standards for behavior on the job
    e. Lack of transportation and/or child care and/or appropriate interviewing clothes and hygiene

2) What improvements would you like to see on federal, state and local levels which could have a positive impact on your programs and overall service delivery?
    a. Stronger partnerships between economic development and the workforce system to increase use of the system by new and expanding employers to recruit and train workers
    b. WIA reauthorization that allows maximum flexibility with regard to transfer of funds between programs and use of funds, including Wagner-Peyser
    c. WIA reauthorization that includes performance measures related to services provided to employers as an incentive to improve and expand those services
    d. Greater percent return on employer FUTA contributions, i.e. higher state allocations for the FUTA-funded Wagner-Peyser labor exchange program, which has been flat funded for over 10 years
    e. Greater development and use of technology to increase access to and use of services

3) What are your most successful programs and/or services in assisting job seekers in obtaining meaningful employment?
   a. **Employment Services**: On line services through Connecting Colorado give employers and job seekers the ability to look for qualified applicants and job openings on a 24/7 basis; we also provide a wide range of workshops and one-on-one counseling that gives job seekers a competitive edge in a tight labor market by helping them develop an effective resume, interviewing skills, career information, networking, and assistance in learning new technology-based tools for social networking and creating electronic resumes/applications/portfolios, etc.
   b. **Reemployment Services for Unemployment Insurance Claimants**: Early intervention is one of the most effective ways to help UI claimants return to work before they exhaust their claims because it makes sure they have the tools, resources and support they need to compete for jobs effectively. All items under Employment Services are offered, as well as regular contact and follow-up.
   c. **Governor's Summer Job Hunt**: This program develops unsubsidized jobs for youth ages 14-21 for the summer months. It has dedicated funding that allows the hiring of additional staff to implement the program.
   d. **Local and State-Sponsored Job Fairs**: These bring employers together with job seekers in an environment that allows face-to-face contact and in some instances, immediate hiring. Prior to attending, many job seekers take advantage of workshops on the techniques for working a job fair that are provided by employment service staff.

Unemployment Insurance Program

1) Approximately, how many unemployed individuals do you think there are in Colorado that are no longer or have never been included in unemployment figures?

   We do not have any data regarding the number of unemployed individuals who are no longer, or never have been, included in the unemployment figures. However, based on results from the Current Population Survey, conducted monthly by the Census Bureau, we can estimate that for the period from September 2008 through August 2009 there were at least 75,000 Coloradans who wanted to work but were not included in the unemployment rate. Of the 75,000 we know about, 42,400 had not looked for work at any time in the past 12 months and 32,500 had looked for work in the past year, but not in the past 4 weeks. (Those numbers add up to only 74,900 due to rounding.)

2) What is needed to improve unemployment benefits and processes?

   The UI Program provides temporary and partial wage replacement to workers who have become unemployed through no fault of their own. The intent of UI benefits is to aid in maintaining the economic stability within a community by safeguarding the income and purchasing power of the unemployed worker.

   Funding. The Colorado UI Program needs adequate base-grant funding from USDOL to improve the ability to deliver timely service to customers. The Employment Support Fund

(ESF), appropriated each year by the Colorado General Assembly to CDLE, mitigates funding deficits for program administration, including information-technology (IT) initiatives. There is always uncertainty regarding the amount of ESF that will be available to the UI Program.

Disaster Preparedness. The UI Program addressed the challenge of providing services in the event an emergency or situation disrupts normal operations. The UI Program developed contingency plans for the continuity of operations in the event of a disaster, which focus on the primary objective of processing and paying UI claims. Committed IT support is critical to create and maintain automated systems that allow the UI Program to take and process claims under normal and emergency situations. This issue is addressed continuously.

Technology The UI Program continues to work towards meeting its customer's needs by utilizing current technology. Several Internet functionalities have been and are being developed. In 2008 and 2009 the UI Program received funding from the state to design, develop, and implement additional Internet self-service (ISS) applications for claimants and employers. The ISS Project allows the UI Program to streamline and update its delivery of services by increasing customers' use of electronic filing methods. The ISS Project will provide interactive Web-based applications that increase the ease with which customers access and submit information.

The UI Program's current telephony systems have been updated with advanced equipment capable of handling today's high call volume demands. These advancements have increased the average number of calls answered per week from 3,800 (January 1, 2009, to April 3, 2009) to 8,400 (April 4, 2009, to July 25, 2009). An outbound dialing system was implemented to notify claimants of important benefit information via a recorded telephone message. The installation of fiber-optic technology will allow expansion of telephone lines, which will enhance speed and provide a framework for the expansion of self-service options.

Workforce Investment Act

1) What are the main concerns/issues employers have in recruiting/retaining skilled workers?
   a. Lack of soft skills (i.e. knowledge of employer expectations and workplace norms, interpersonal skills, work ethic)
   b. Lack of job skills
   c. Lack of credentials and specific occupational training
   d. Lack of industry/occupational experience
   e. Low reading and math skills

2) How are ARRA funds being used at the local level?
   a. WIA Adult Services that target low income and other disadvantaged workers and increase the number who receive occupational and work readiness training
   b. WIA Dislocated Worker Services that increase the number of laid off workers who receive necessary retraining or skill upgrades, and provide early intervention and referral to workforce centers through the Rapid Response program

c. WIA Summer Youth Employment Program that targets low income and out-of-school youth and provides paid work experiences to increase their skill levels, work readiness, and exposure to the requirements and demands of specific occupations.
d. WIA Year Round Youth Services that target low income and out-of-school youth and focus on education and skill training that leads to post secondary programs and/or job placement
e. Reemployment Services for Unemployment Insurance Claimants to help claimants return to work as quickly as possible and to identify which claimants are most in need of retraining
f. Employment Services (Wagner-Peyser) that supplements the regular program and allows for an increase in labor exchange services
g. Discretionary grants that pay for required WIA activities such as performance incentives, technical assistance, and training for the workforce system; and support sector based initiatives to develop regional employment and training solutions to meet the workforce needs of businesses

3) What more can be done to revitalize this economy and better meet employer needs?
   a. Closer alignment with education, industry sectors, and economic development

4) What workforce regions have successful local collaborations between industry, educational institutions, the trades, workforce centers and community-based programs that could be shared statewide?
   a. All of them do

5) What have the Governor's Jobs Cabinet and Statewide Workforce Development Initiative accomplished since their inception? How are job creation and economic development efforts coordinated with the Office of Economic Development and International Trade?

   a. Since the appointment of the Jobs Cabinet, the entire Jobs Cabinet met in four plenary sessions, conducted nineteen outreach meetings in thirteen Colorado communities across Colorado, and conducted a stateside survey to assess who businesses understand and use the resources available from community colleges, the workforce system and economic development partners.
   b. On August 24, 2009, the Jobs Cabinet issued their report to Governor Ritter. That report included five core recommendations supported by specific ideas to implement those recommendations. The Jobs Cabinet recommended:
      i. Implement a local collaboration forum to align education, economic development workforce training and business recruitment efforts;
      ii. Engage employers in workforce assessments to ensure local education needs are targeted;
      iii. Aggressively promote talent development programs to effectively engage Colorado business;
      iv. Develop a coordinated web portal that provides business with easy access to local resources and information;
      v. Provide senior executive leadership, on-going support and performance metrics to ensure the success of the initiative.

c. The Jobs Cabinet perceives the workforce system as the convener of collaborations. In keeping with the Jobs Cabinet recommendations, job creation and economic development efforts are part of the collaborative effort, both at the state and local levels across Colorado.
    i. At the state level, the Workforce Development Council will lead the collaboration and, as metrics are met, assume responsibility for the continuing implementation of the Jobs Cabinet recommendations. As such, the Office of Economic Development and the Economic Development Council of Colorado (EDCC) will carry a significant role in the coordination of statewide job creation and economic development efforts.
    ii. The real burden for change exists at the local level, where community economic development entities will have this role in the local collaborations.

d. Per the Jobs Cabinet report, metrics are being developed, with a number of recommendations anticipated to be implemented by the end of April, 2010. Two important projects are already underway:
    i. Workforce Academies, designed to help raise the strategic capacity of the Colorado Workforce Development Council and their interested partners; and
    ii. A Workforce Summit coordinated by the Colorado Community College system to be held in November which will assemble business leaders in key sectors to advise the collaboration partners on their workforce development and training needs.

Ex-Offender Programs

1) Funding ends April 2010 for the "Stop the Revolving Door" Program. Are there plans to continue this successful program? How can we help you to secure stable funding?

    a. Because the "Stop the Revolving Door" (SRD) program has been so successful, CDLE has awarded the SRD program additional funding from discretionary funds, which do not expire until June 2010. Given the additional funding, the SRD program will be able to serve an additional 150 offenders.

    b. You could help CDLE secure stable funding for the SRD offender employment and training re-entry program by:

        1) Re-investing a portion of the money the SRD program saves the state by reducing recidivism and placing offenders in viable employment back into the SRD program. The SRD program will pay for itself many times over through recidivism reduction. Reducing recidivism by 10% will save the state millions of dollars. If we reinvest a portion of the funds saved back into the SRD program, we will have a continuous funding stream, and it will be based on performance and success.

2) Re-Allocating Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Reserve funds to the SRD program to serve offenders who are TANF eligible.
3) Appropriating funding to CDLE specifically for the SRD program.

2) What is needed for you to continue/enhance your programs focusing on ex-offenders?

a. Increased funding – CDLE will need additional funds to continue the SRD program after June 2010.

b. CDLE would like to see a better collaboration/partnership with the Department of Corrections with regards to workforce development and the delivery of employment and training services. CDLE has been providing offenders with employment and training services for 20 years and are the experts in helping people gain meaningful employment. We would like to offer our expertise to DOC and provide the employment and training portion of their re-entry services using our SRD model.

c. A better partnership and delineation of roles and responsibilities between CDLE and DOC with regards to workforce development and employment services will reduce the duplication of effort and eliminate the duplication of programs. It would allow for better collaboration, stronger partnerships, an increase in leveraged of resources and the sharing of expertise.

The High Cost of Being Poor & the Business of Poverty

People living in poverty often end up paying more for a range of goods and services than do those not living in poverty. This affects metro and non-metro families and individuals, though sometimes in different ways. Those living in poverty pay more for food, shelter, transportation, credit and financial services (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004). Families and individuals with low incomes pay more in money, time and hassle. There are a number of causes leading to the high cost of poverty. One happens to be that poverty has become a booming business for some industries, particularly in the area of credit and financial services (Brown, 2009; Grow, et al., 2007). People with low income pay more to access credit for cars, housing, credit cards, and goods through the rent-to-own industry.

Food & Goods. In metro areas, low-income neighborhoods are often without large supermarkets. It costs money and time to take a bus to the supermarket, so people pay more to shop at the neighborhood corner store where the selection and quality do not match the large supermarkets. A Brookings Institution (Fellowes, 2006) comparison of large supermarkets and small neighborhood stores found that 70% of items at the small store cost more than the same items at a large supermarket. The same is true in non-metro areas. In many non-metro areas there is no large supermarket, so people either have to travel long distances to do their shopping, or they pay more at the local store, which must charge more because it does not have the economy of scale found in large stores. The same scenario is found with clothing, furniture and many other goods all families need.

Rent-to-own stores are a way for low-income households to acquire goods such as furniture, electronics such as televisions and computers, and other appliances. By purchasing items through a rent-to-own store, consumers end up paying much more for goods than they would if they could afford to pay all at once. Often, however, consumers are unable to complete the payments on the goods, the items are repossessed.

There is an enormous cost associated with going to work that is absorbed more easily by those with greater financial means. For those living in poverty, those costs can be an insurmountable barrier to moving out of poverty.

Transportation. For those living in non-metro areas, there is often a lack of public transportation, so there is the cost of buying and owning a car. One study found that nearly 98 percent of rural working families relied upon a car for all of their transportation needs (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004). For those in metro areas, reliance on public transportation can limit the range of employment options for an individual. If a person with low income must rely on a personal vehicle for transportation, he or she will likely pay more to buy a reliable car and will likely incur excessive fees and interest rates in order to finance that purchase. Nationally, nearly 4.5 million lower income households pay higher than average loan rates on their cars (Fellowes, 2006). If a person has poor credit history, he or she will have to go to subprime financing, which can be double or triple a typical prime loan (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004). Once an individual purchases the vehicle, the cost of insurance must be factored in, which is often higher for individuals with low-income as compared to higher income drivers. (Fellowes, 2006).

If a person must rely on public transportation, there is a cost of time associated with getting to and from work and daily life. What might take 10 minutes in a car could take over an hour by bus. This means less time to do other things: work, being with family, running errands and doing household chores, etc.

Child Care. If a person has young children, it is likely he or she will need to access child care. Government work requirements and the cost of living vs. average wages require most adults to be in the job market, which also reduces the availability of child care by kin (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004). In Colorado, 2009 annual child care costs for fulltime child care at a center range between $9,067-$11,767, depending on the age of the child, and $7,403-$8,050 for fulltime care in a family child care home (National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, 2009). The same study also finds that the cost of fulltime center care for an infant is 15 percent of the median income of a married-couple family with children under 18, and it is 45 percent of the median income for single parent female headed families with children under 18.

Housing. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation (2004), there is no housing market in the country where a family earning today's fulltime minimum wage could afford a decent two-bedroom rental without exceeding 30 percent of their income, which is the accepted standard for percentage of income that should go toward housing costs. That report found that rural families often turn to manufactured housing, which is financed as personal property and therefore more expensive to finance, and those homes don't appreciate in value. Low-income homeowners, especially low-income minority homeowners, are more likely to be preyed upon by subprime lenders (HUD).

Financial Services. Because many low-income households do not have access to traditional credit, they turn to alternate sources to acquire the goods and services they need. This occurs in the form of payday lenders, sub-prime mortgage lenders, high cost tax preparation services, check-cashing services, pawnshops and title lending, and low-income consumer-targeted credit cards with costly fees and excessive rates.

For those individuals who are "unbanked," instead of benefiting from a direct deposit option, they must use check-cashing services that charge a fee for cashing a check. People will fill out a money order to pay a bill, which also entails a fee.

Payday lending was found to be a $40 billion industry in 2005, and that number has likely only grown in the economic downturn (Nicholson, et al., 2008). The Center for Responsible Lending found that in Colorado nearly two-thirds of payday loans were made to borrowers with 12 or more transactions a year (King et al.). These "alternative" financial services often put people in desperate situations into a downward spiral of debt that can be nearly impossible to escape, instead of providing the access to credit that many hoped would help them climb out of poverty.

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Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force

Colorado Department of Education Follow-Up Questions

1) For each program identified in the department survey, what are the top three ideas that could supplement or assist this program to provide economic opportunity and reduce poverty – in the short-term at little or no cost, and in the long-term? Consider federal, state and county level changes that could advance best practices, enhance program effectiveness, improve collaborations and save public dollars.

Increase awareness about existing adult education/family literacy programs as options and strategies that could provide services to clients rather than start-up or solicitation of new programs.

Consider including existing adult education/family literacy programs and/or state Adult Education Family Literacy (AEFL) office as partners in grant proposals.
Look for cross-training and shared training opportunities.

2) How do you measure success for each program identified in the department survey, in terms of reducing poverty and advancing self-sufficiency in Colorado? What performance measures do you use? What prevents you from evaluating this program in ways that would tell us the impact of these services on poverty reduction? What can you recommend?

Performance measures: educational gains, obtain employment/retain employment/improve employment, enter post-secondary education or training, earn GED or adult high school diploma

Upon enrollment, low income and public assistance factors are self-identified by students. This information (in aggregate) is reported annually to the U.S. Department of Education. We are not required to report increased income or decreased dependence on public assistance; however, we could add such fields to our data collection system.

Collect income information on students whose goals are to decrease dependence on public assistance, obtain employment, and/or improve employment.

Specific Program Questions

Adult Literacy/Education
1) What would you say were the top five elements/influences that have a positive impact on successful completion in obtaining a GED and/or learning English as a second language?

Teacher quality, instructional program quality, learner persistence, learner support (e.g. child care, transportation, counseling/mentoring, spouse/family support), sufficient intensity and duration of instruction.

2) What are the top five influences/barriers that have a negative impact on successful completion of getting a GED and/or learning English as a second language?

Learner frustration, lack of intensity/duration, mobility of students, life issues associated with low skills/poverty, insufficient numbers of teachers with training in adult basic education.

3) What percentage of students enrolled in Adult Literacy programs successfully obtain a GED?

In FY08, 54% of students whose goal was to obtain a GED or diploma, achieved that goal within the program year.

4) What are some of the most successful programs that have been implemented on the local level in the Adult Literacy Programs? Why do you think they have been so successful?

Learning Source for Adults and Families (Denver, Lakewood), Front Range Community College (Ft. Collins, Loveland), St. Vrain Adult Education (Longmont), Adult and Family Education-SD-11 (Colorado Springs), Harrison Adult and Family Education (Colorado Springs SD 2), Adult Education Center (Durango).

Strong leadership, high quality instruction, ongoing professional development, support from the community

5) What five things needed to enhance statewide Adult Literacy Programs?

State support (not necessarily limited to funding), improve teacher quality, implement program standards, implement instructional standards, increase intensity and duration, increase learner support system.

6) You mention better coordination is needed with other programs such as TANF, Community Development, public housing, homeless services, refugee services and workforce centers. (organizations that serve the same target populations - under-educated, unemployed, low-income, limited English proficient adults and families). What kinds of better coordination would you like to see?

More interaction/discussion of mutual target populations and development of a referral system.

7) You mention better support services, such as child care, transportation, pre-employment and occupational training are needed; could you elaborate on what your students have encountered in getting/not getting these needed support services?

Lack of such support often prevents or precludes students' ability to participate or to participate at the level of intensity needed to make progress and achieve goals.

8) What kind of outreach is there or what more is planned to help parents who have children who are at-risk? (Even Start; English Language Learners as two examples of outreach)

Awareness and coordination with Title I schools (for example, our office coordinated the development of Navigating the American School System as a tool for ELL parents)
Collaboration with Even Start (state and local)
Collaboration with Title I, especially in the areas of family literacy and parent involvement
Under development: toolkit/resources for parent involvement (for LEP, ELL, and low literacy parents of children in K-12).
Administration of the state awarded Family Literacy Education Fund (FLEF) as a resource for existing Even Start and AEFLA-funded programs in communities serving Title I schools

Other Pre-School, K-12, Alternative High School, Vocational Education Options

1) What other programs besides Adult Literacy are there in the Department of Education that may also address poverty reduction/prevention?
Please see programs listed in PowerPoint presentation from previous appearance.

2) What are your most successful Teen Parent Programs? Are they expanding?

CDE does not collect any data related to teen parent programs.

3) In your opinion, what are the main causes for school drop-out?
Several factors influence a students' school success. Environmental and familial factors that have shown to influence educational success include, the education level of a child's parents, especially the mother's educational attainment. In addition, poverty issues in the early years (lack of proper nutrition, access to health care...) can impact a child's later learning. There are also issues at the school level that are early warnings that student may be headed toward dropping out of school.

To gain a better understanding of the dropout problem in Colorado, a study of five Colorado school districts with the highest number of students dropping out was conducted by Johns Hopkins University. The study was funded by the Piton Foundation and Donnell-Kay Foundation. The results showed the following:

- *Most dropouts are giving warning signals even years in advance (failing grades, absences, behavior issues...)*
- *Majorities of dropouts have at least one 9th grade semester failure (to some extent related to attendance and academic proficiency).*
- *Failing even one or two semester courses in 9th grade dramatically reduces probability of on-time graduation.*
- *Dropouts have higher levels of suspensions than others.*

Issues that influence whether a student remains in school, tend to cluster in four areas:

- *Life events (forces outside of school cause students to drop out)*

- *Lack of School Connection. (students fade out – they do OK in school but stop seeing a reason for staying, there is a lack of attachment to school)*
- *School policies and practices that push out students, such as those who are or perceived to be detrimental to others in the school)*
- *School Failure - failing in school, schools failing students (not providing resources, appropriate instruction, lack of high expectations for all students...)*

Source: Robert Balfanz and Martha McIver, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University, 2008.

4) What are the main issues/barriers that need to be looked at in order to improve our high school drop out rates and school re-entry successes?

To solve the dropout crisis, Johns Hopkins University made the following recommendations:

- *Need to implement early warning systems and tiered interventions in middle school and 9th grade, with follow-through in later grades*
- *Reduction of the dropout rate will demand a commitment to providing recovery options within courses, before failure occurs (rather than only afterwards)*
- *Interdisciplinary teams need to meet regularly to analyze student data, devise solutions, and monitor progress*
- *Interventions to improve attendance and behavior must allow for continued in-school learning*
- *Need comprehensive approach that has integrated prevention, intervention and recovery elements and at the scale and scope required to cut the dropout rate in half (or by more).*

In terms of poverty impacts, the research indicates that students in high poverty school who successfully navigate grades 6 to 10 on time and on track (passing grades and attainment of adequate number of credits), mostly graduate from high school (75% or higher grad rates). In converse, students in high poverty school districts who struggle and become disengaged in the early secondary grades and particularly those who have an unsuccessful 6th and/or 9th grade transition do not graduate (20% or less graduation rates). This indicates that it must be a priority that we ensure positive transitions between elementary school and middle school and middle school and high school. When need to do a better job in tracking student progress and providing match appropriate supports with student need.

5) How effective is the free/reduced lunch programs for impacting learning? How can we improve or expand the program?
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Studies have shown the correlation between nutrition and learning. By providing a nutrition program(s) breakfast and/or lunch, students receive nutritional meals which meets the Dietary Guidelines. The School Breakfast Program provides ¼ of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) and the National School Lunch Program provides 1/3 of the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA). 177 school districts in the state participate in the National School Lunch Program and 160 school districts participate in the School Breakfast Program; participation in the federally funded Child Nutrition Programs is voluntary.

Additionally the program offers households the opportunity to apply for meal benefits for the program which is voluntary. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals; those with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals; children from families with incomes over 185 percent of poverty pay full price, though their meals also receive a subsidy. Students eligible for meal benefits in the program often times do not participate, especially at the high school level

Participating districts strive to plan a menu that includes increased fresh fruits and vegetable and whole grains, which is encouraged to meet the Dietary Guidelines. Rising food costs, other expenses, and location often times prohibits the changing of the menu to include more variety and fresh food items. Monetary resources are often limited in the program.

6) Can you tell us about your pre-school and full day kindergarten programs? Are they successful? Why? What more is needed?

Colorado Preschool Program: *The Colorado Preschool Program was established in 1988 by the Colorado General Assembly to serve preschool children who lack overall learning readiness due to individual and family risk factors (22-28-101 through 22-28-114 C.R.S.). Funding is provided for a half-day preschool program and family support. One of the qualifying factors for CPP is eligibility for free and reduced price meals and the majority of CPP children qualify under this factor. Currently CPP is authorized to serve 20,160 preschool aged children, which is 27.8% of the four-year-olds in the state.*

CPP is voluntary - 169 out of 178 school districts and the Charter School Institute participate in CPP. Because the program is capped by the Legislature, each district has a CPP "slot allocation." CPP children are served in a variety of early care and education settings. School districts may provide their own programs and/or may contract with Head Start programs or community programs.

Outcomes for the Colorado Preschool Program are measured through Results Matter, which is a comprehensive assessment system for Colorado's early care and education programs. CPP has been able to demonstrate that at-risk children start the preschool year behind their more advantaged peers, but when they are provided with a preschool experience and family support, they experience faster growth in social and emotional, physical, cognitive, language development and emergent literacy. Thus narrowing the gap before children entered kindergarten.

School districts have also found these effects are long lasting and CPP improves academic outcomes in the K-12 years and reduces the need for remediation. See the 2009 CPP Legislative Report (http://www.cde.state.co.us/cpp/download/CPPInformation/2009_Legislative_Report.pdf).

Full-Day Kindergarten:

In 2008, the Legislature created an opportunity for both "supplemental" and "hold-harmless" full-day kindergarten funding through the School Finance Formula. The "supplemental" funding allows kindergarten pupils in all districts to be counted as .5 FTE, but a factor of .58 FTE is used to calculate funding. The additional kindergarten money is provided is to support increased participation in full-day kindergarten programs. At the time this funding was provided, it was the intent of the legislature to continue to increase the investment in full-day kindergarten funding over a five year period.

Also in 2008, when full-day kindergarten funding was eliminated from the Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program, "hold-harmless" funding was provided to districts to continue existing full-day kindergarten programs established under CPKP.

How these full-day kindergarten programs are implemented is determined at a local level and the department does not collect effectiveness data on either full-day kindergarten or half-day kindergarten programs.

7) Are there any plans to expand vocational education training and the trades as an alternative option for students not wishing or not suited to attend college?

This question could probably be better addressed by the community college system regarding career and technical education (CTE) programs.

8) What are your most effective alternative high school programs?
In terms of effectiveness, one measure is to look at dropout rates, since this information is disaggregated by instructional type of program. In 2007-08, the state dropout rate of self-identified, alternative schools was 22%. The following table lists by district, alternative schools that have a dropout rate below the state average.

County Name	Alternative Schools Only Organization Name	Total Pupil Count	Total Dropouts	Total Dropout Rate for 2007-08
	STATE TOTALS (ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS ONLY)	19,664	4332	22.0
ALAMOSA	ALAMOSA RE-11J	94	19	20.2
COLORADO BOCS	MOUNTAIN BOCES	186	37	19.9
LAS ANIMAS	BRANSON REORGANIZED 82	61	12	19.7
EL PASO	HARRISON 2	505	98	19.4
ARCHULETA	ARCHULETA COUNTY 50 JT	75	14	18.7
ADAMS	ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOLS	725	131	18.1
ADAMS	WESTMINSTER 50	271	49	18.1
OTERO	EAST OTERO R-1	32	5	15.6
EL PASO	WIDEFIELD 3	157	24	15.3
ELBERT	ELIZABETH C-1	80	12	15.0
LARIMER	POUDRE R-1	800	109	13.6
GUNNISON	GUNNISON WATERSHED RE1J	37	5	13.5
EL PASO	FOUNTAIN 8	230	30	13.0
EAGLE	EAGLE COUNTY RE 50	133	17	12.8
BOULDER	BOULDER VALLEY RE 2	446	54	12.1
MONTROSE	MONTROSE COUNTY RE-1J	34	4	11.8
EL PASO	COLORADO SPRINGS 11	698	78	11.2
LA PLATA	IGNACIO 11 JT	40	4	10.0
DOUGLAS	DOUGLAS COUNTY RE 1	456	40	8.8
EL PASO	ACADEMY 20	131	11	8.4
RIO GRANDE	MONTE VISTA C-8	264	19	7.2
GARFIELD	ROARING FORK RE-1	96	6	6.3
COLORADO BOCS	NORTHWEST COLO BOCES	17	1	5.9
CONEJOS	NORTH CONEJOS RE-1J	136	7	5.1
CHAFFEE	BUENA VISTA R-31	65	3	4.6
LOGAN	VALLEY RE-1	26	1	3.8
DELTA	DELTA COUNTY 50(J)	416	10	2.4
ADAMS	STRASBURG 31J	11	0	0.0

In terms of programming, CDE's Expelled and At-Risk Student Services (EARSS) grant program conducts an annual evaluation, which identifies effective strategies implemented by funded sites. These sites typically represent alternative schools and alternative educational programs. In

2008-09, sites reported the following strategies as the most effective in supporting positive student outcomes:

- ***Academic credit recovery:*** *Refers to programs/activities that allow a student to continue earning course credits and to advance toward graduation and/or facilitates accrual of credits, especially in core courses (math, science, reading and social studies). May include self-paced digital content or online programs.*
- ***Character education and Social skill building:*** *Refers to programming that addresses the development of emotional, intellectual and moral qualities of a person or group as well as the demonstration of these qualities in pro-social behavior. Character education teaches the habits of thought and deed that help people live and work together as families, friends, neighbors, communities and nations. May include leadership development, conflict resolution and programs to increase self-awareness, citizenship and empathy.*
- ***Individualized Instruction****: Generally refers to instruction that is tailored and attentive to a student's learning style and educational needs and may be integrated with individual learning plans.*
- ***Positive staff-student mentoring and relationships****: Refers to one-on-one or small group mentoring by staff and student connections to a caring adult. Strategies and activities may include, but not limited to Check and Connect, advising, coaching, problem solving, self-esteem building...*
- ***Wraparound case management****: Refers to an approach based on a team of people who come together around family strengths and needs to create unique interventions and supports based on a process of unconditional care. Family participation in decision-making is a key component. Involves provision of services and interventions to both students and parents and activities that facilitate family access to needed community services.*

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force

Colorado Department of Higher Education Follow-Up Questions

1) **For each program identified in the department survey,** what are the top three ideas that could supplement or assist this program to provide economic opportunity and reduce poverty – in the short-term at little or no cost, and in the long-term? Consider federal, state and county level changes that could advance best practices, enhance program effectiveness, improve collaborations and save public dollars.

Increase funding for higher education either through base funding or through financial aid programs.

Encourage concurrent enrollment to high school students.

Provide additional fiscal responsibility education to students to students entering college.

2) How do you measure success for each program identified in the department survey, in terms of reducing poverty and advancing self-sufficiency in Colorado? What performance measures do you use? What prevents you from evaluating this program in ways that would tell us the impact of these services on poverty reduction? What can you recommend?

State funded financial aid is targeted towards the neediest students in Colorado. The goals of the programs are to reduce the financial barriers that may deter low income students from entering into higher education and to improve access. Research indicates that lifetime earnings increase with each level of education[1]. Although it is known that education leads to more opportunity, jobs must be available once students graduate.

[1] http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/parents-should-know-pay-college-trends-2008.pdf

Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force
Colorado Community College System Responses

1. What educational opportunities exist for nontraditional, older students who need skills for gainful employment?

Each of the 13 community colleges have programs in place to assist nontraditional aged students with career planning and skill development. The following is a listing of available programs:

Greening Lakewood Businesses Partnership
Red Rocks Community College (RRCC) is providing the educational component for the Greening Lakewood Business Partnership (GLB). GLB is a public-private partnership under the direction of the Alameda Gateway Community Association, with the goal of Greening Lakewood Business to develop a sustainable model for initiating a citywide conversion of commercial properties of less than 50,000 square feet to optimum energy efficient standards. It is designed for unemployed students who are over 50. This is a very good pathway for boomers who with experience in the trades but who can no longer handle the heavy lifting.

A key feature of the partnership is educating and retraining veterans / RRCC students for employment in the private sector, creating a cycle of education, employment and refurbishment potentially affecting 250 properties and 4,000 students / employees over the next ten years. The first commercial property conversions are going on this fall at two non-profit organizations, The Learning Source and Easter Seals of Colorado.

Arapahoe Community College Workshops To Help People Move Forward In Their Lives
Arapahoe Community College (ACC) has designed a set of free non-credit workshops & career planning tools to assist under or unemployed individuals. Topics include:

- Brain Gym: Why Learning is Not All in your Head!
- Map and Plan Your Volunteer Vacation
- Writing for Fun and Profit
- Taking the Fear Out of Retirement
- Starting a Business in Colorado
- Field Inspector Career Basics: An Overview of Opportunities
- Becoming a Professional Mediator
- Basic Mediation Certificate
- Discovering Your Passion
- Discover Your Strengths
- Career Change Success! What You Need to Know and Do
- How to Become a Virtual Assistant
- Hottest Travel Careers
- How to be a Travel Writer: The Easy Way

CAREER TRAINING ONLINE

- Secrets of the Caterer
- How to Become a Veterinary Assistant
- Start and Operate Your Own Home Based Business
- Starting a Consulting Practice
- Learn to Buy and Sell on e-Bay
- Administrative Assistant Fundamentals
- Professional Sales Skills
- Administrative Assistant Applications
- Business and Marketing Writing
- Growing Plants for Fun and Profit
- Become an Optical Assistant

CAREER SEARCH ONLINE

- Resume Writing Workshop
- Listen to Your Heart and Success Will Follow
- Making Age an Asset in Your Job Search

Worksmart Programs

Arapahoe Community College has designed the Jumpstart a new career with a Worksmart Program. It is a set of 50 training programs that can be completed in one year or less. Programs include criminal justice, education, business and computer science.

MCC Skills Certificate

Morgan Community College (MCC) worked with older adults in rural Colorado who needed to return to the workforce because of a need to supplement their incomes. MCC created a mini certificate program that included courses in Career Communications, Introduction to Windows, Introduction to Email and the Internet, Introduction to Word and Introduction to Excel. The students also participated in a "Job Club" where they received assistance with application preparation and other activities related to finding employment. A number of the students (all seniors) are now employed part-time.

2) What is the average age of a community college student and how does this vary across the system and why?

The average age of students enrolled in Colorado Community College System is 28. The average age is up from 24 years old last year. We believe this is a result of a number of older adults returning to school to retrain for employment. Generally, the residential colleges and colleges with athletic programs have slightly younger student populations.

However, the fact all colleges serve nontraditional age students is documented by the institutions' average student population age:

Community College	Avg. Age
Arapahoe Community College	29.97
Community College of Aurora	29.11
Community College of Denver	26.91
Colorado Northwestern Community College	29.39
Front Range Community College	26.86
Lamar Community College	26.41
Morgan Community College	28.13
Northeastern Junior College	31.39
Otero Junior College	26.51
Pueblo Community College	28.83
Pikes Peak Community College	27.80
Red Rocks Community College	28.87
Trinidad State Junior College	28.16