

OVERVIEW OF WELFARE REFORM AND REAUTHORIZATION

The 1996 Republican welfare reforms have worked.

- Child poverty fell sharply. Since 1996, 1.4 million children have been lifted from poverty; the black child poverty rate has fallen 15 percent. (Census Bureau)
- More parents are working. Work among welfare recipients has more than doubled. (Ways and Means Green Book 2004)
- Dependence fell by unprecedented levels. Welfare caseloads fell by 9 million -- from 14 million recipients in 1994 to just 5 million today. (HHS)

Still, there is more work left to do.

- 57 percent of recipients are not working or training. (HHS)
- Too many families break up or never form.
- 2 million families remain dependent on welfare. (HHS)

H.R. 4, the House-passed welfare reauthorization bill maintains and strengthens the 1996 reforms.

- More parents are expected to work for their benefits.
- States will continue to receive record federal welfare and child care funds, despite huge caseload declines since 1996.
- New marriage promotion funds will strengthen families.
- “State flex” and other provisions will help better coordinate programs to help more needy families support themselves.