

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Extension *Extending and Improving the Integrity of a Program for Needy Families*

OVERVIEW

The Middle Class Tax Relief & Job Creation Act extends through September 30, 2012, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), which is set to expire on December 31, 2011, while making some needed reforms to ensure that taxpayer funds are protected from abuse.

REFORMS TO TANF

The following changes are made to the TANF program:

- 1. Improves program administration by standardizing data elements to improve integrity and collaboration**
 - Improves data matching and program integrity by requiring standardized data and HHS coordination of exchanges across State TANF programs.
 - This language is identical to language in the *Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act* that became law earlier this year (P.L. 112-210), which required standardization of child welfare data.
 - This language continues bipartisan efforts to standardize human services program data to allow for better sharing of information and to improve understanding of how individuals interact with multiple welfare programs.
- 2. Closes the current “strip club loophole”**
 - The legislation ensures that welfare funds cannot be accessed at ATMs in strip clubs, liquor stores, and casinos.
 - The proposal penalizes states that do not enforce this provision and report to the Department of Health and Human Services within two years of enactment.
 - This provision is identical to the *Welfare Integrity Now for Children and Families Act of 2011*, introduced by Senators Baucus and Hatch, Chairman and Ranking Member, respectively, of the Senate Finance Committee.

BACKGROUND

TANF was created as part of the 1996 welfare reform law. The law established increased work requirements for recipients and limited the length of time individuals could receive Federal welfare checks.

BY THE NUMBERS

- According to the [most recent data](#), there are 4.4 million TANF recipients in the U.S.
- Media reports in [numerous States have documented](#) how thousands of dollars in welfare benefits have been accessed at ATMs in strip clubs, liquor stores, and casinos under current law.