



# COUNTY OF SUMMIT, OHIO

Russell M. Pry, Executive

175 S. Main Street • Akron, Ohio 44308-1308 • 330.643.2510 • fax: 330.643.2507 • www.co.summit.oh.us

May 11, 2016

The Honorable Kevin Brady, Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Brady and Committee Members,

On behalf of the County of Summit, I write to advise you of my strong support of H.R. 2991, the "Preparing More Welfare Recipients for Work Act," "to encourage States to engage more TANF recipients in activities leading to employment and self-sufficiency, and to simplify State administration of TANF" and to request that the Committee pass this legislation at the earliest opportunity, or include the content of H.R. 2991 in a bill at a future time.

This bill demonstrates a Congressional willingness to listen to local issues identified as barriers to meeting the intent for TANF clients to find employment and self-sufficiency. It is an outstanding example of bi-partisan cooperation and good government. The "Preparing More Welfare Recipients for Work Act" would not only improve the counting of required hours of participation in work activities thereby creating a better chance of success of TANF recipients for completing their required hours, but also puts real emphasis on education as a way of improving the lives of TANF recipients. By making education a legitimate form of credit towards a TANF recipient's work requirement, this bill gives the recipients a greater chance at acquiring the education and skills necessary to find gainful employment and transition out of the TANF program. I have been actively engaged in highlighting my frustration with the participation rule that will not allow a TANF recipient's work toward getting a GED as required hours of participation. Education and training are the most important factors in a person's success in finding a job that will lead to self-sufficiency, and removing any barrier to educational attainment increases their chance of transitioning out of TANF.

I had the opportunity to meet with Congressman Jim Renacci and his staff in February of 2015 to highlight my concerns about what activities are not considered core activities and other administrative barriers to meeting the work requirement for TANF recipients. My staff and I presented the Congressman with an overview of our County's numbers and results for our TANF clients and suggestions to help people with the transition to employment. I am attaching that exhibit to this letter.

I would encourage the Committee to support the content of H.R. 2991 as a common sense improvement to the current TANF system in order to move people for TANF to employment and I commend Congressman Renacci for understanding and advocating for common sense solutions to putting people to work.

Sincerely,

Russell M. Pry

Summit County Executive



## Summit County Department of Job and Family Services

### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

#### Ohio Works First (OWF)

**February 2015**

**2,844** = Total TANF/OWF recipients in Summit County

**374** = Total **Work Eligible** TANF/OWF recipients in Summit County

**Work Eligible Individual** = An adult or minor head of household receiving OWF; or a non-recipient parent living with a child who is in receipt of OWF unless the parent is:

- A minor parent who is not a head-of household
- A non-citizen who is not eligible to receive OWF due to his or her immigration status
- A recipient of supplemental security income (SSI) benefits
- A recipient of social security disability insurance (SSDI) benefits
- A parent providing care for a disabled family member, if the disabled family member is living in the same home and there is medical documentation to support the need for the parent to remain in the home to provide care

Assistance Group (AG)	Required Core Hours Monthly	Allowable Non-Core Hours	Required Total Hours Monthly
One Work Eligible Individual (Adult) with a child(ren) <b>under age 6</b>	86	0	86
One Work Eligible Individual (Adult) with a child(ren) <b>over age 6</b>	86	43	129
Two Work Eligible Individuals	129	22	151
Two Work Eligible Individuals <b>utilizing federally funded Child Care</b>	215	22	237

#### Work Activities

Core Activities	Applicable Limits
Unsubsidized Employment	N/A
Subsidized Employment (SEP-Private)	N/A

Subsidized Employment (SEP-Public)	N/A
On the Job Training (OJT)	N/A
Work Experience Program (WEP)	Hours limited by Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
Community Service Programs	N/A
Vocational Educational Training	12 month lifetime limit
Providing Child Care for a Community Service Participant	N/A
Job Search and Job Readiness	No more than 6 weeks in the preceding 12 months and no more than 4 weeks consecutive
<b>Non-Core Activities</b>	<b>Applicable Limits</b>
Job Skills Training Directly Related to Employment	N/A
Education Directly Related to Employment	Limited to individuals without a diploma or GED (no time limit)
^Secondary School Attendance( i.e. ESL class, high school and GED course)	Limited to individuals without a diploma or GED (no time limit)
<b>Alternative Activities (i.e. parenting classes, life skills training, counseling, medical appointments, and drug or alcohol treatment)</b>	<b>Not Countable Toward Work Activity Participation</b>

^In 2014 2 work eligible OWF recipients were assigned to attend GED as a Non-Core Activity

#### Education Related Deemed Hours of Participation

Activity	Applicable limits
*GED, High School, or Equivalent	-Individuals <b>under</b> age 20 only -Must verify and maintain satisfactory attendance -Must participate for an average of 20 hours per week

\*In 2014 67 work eligible OWF recipients were deemed as meeting participation with their GED or High School attendance