NORTH Dakota | Health & Human Services
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Testimony
House Bill No. 1036
Senate Human Services Committee
Senator Judy Lee, Chairman
March 20, 2023

Chairman Lee and members of the Senate Human Services Committee, I am Michele Gee, Director of the Economic Assistance Section with the Department of Health and Human Services (Department). I appear before you to provide testimony on House Bill 1036.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program was originally established as part of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), replacing the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) Program.

House Bill 1036 proposes changes to North Dakota Century Code section 50-09-29, setting the maximum benefit level for the TANF Program at "fifty percent or more of the federal poverty level based on household size".

The TANF benefit level is currently defined in section 75-02-01.2-35 of the North Dakota Administrative Code and represents the amount of household income, adjusted by household size and living arrangement, that is necessary to maintain a standard of living compatible with decency and health. The six basic items of need considered are shelter, food, clothing, personal need items, household supplies, fuel and utilities.

The current standard of need as outlined in North Dakota Administrative Code means that families whose household income is approximately 22-25% of the Federal Poverty Limit may be eligible to receive assistance from the TANF program. Translated into dollars and cents, this means that a single parent household with two children may be eligible to receive a financial benefit from TANF if their household income is equal to or less than $5,069 a year, or approximately $422 of earnings per month.

The change proposed in House Bill 1036 would allow families with household income that is equal to approximately 50% of the Federal Poverty Limit to become eligible for TANF financial assistance in North Dakota. This would mean that a single parent household with two children may be eligible for the TANF program if their income is equal to or less than $11,520 a year, or approximately $960 a month.

This concludes my testimony. I would be happy to try to answer any questions the committee may have. Thank you.

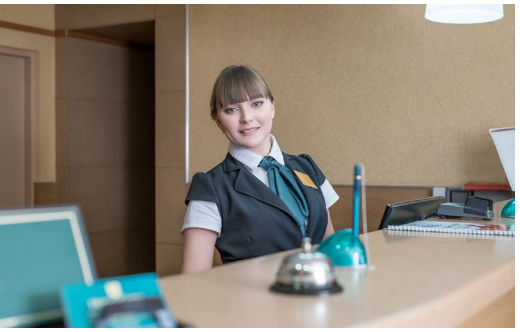
Appendix: Comparison of the 2023 state median income (SMI) and federal poverty level

Families potentially eligible for CCAP
Families potentially eligible for LIHEAP and SNAP
Families potentially eligible for TANF

	25% Federal Poverty Level		100% Federal Poverty Level		10% SMI		60% SMI		85% SMI		100% SMI	
Household Size	**Annual Income**	**Hourly Wage**	**Annual Income**	**Hourly Wage**	**Annual Income**	**Hourly Wage**	**Annual Income**	**Hourly Wage**	**Annual Income**	**Hourly Wage**	**Annual Income**	**Hourly Wage**
1	$ 3,645	$ 1.75	$ 14,580	$ 7.01	$ 5,568	$ 2.68	$ 33,407	$ 16.06	$ 47,328	$ 22.75	$ 55,680	$ 26.77
2	$ 4,930	$ 2.37	$ 19,720	$ 9.48	$ 7,284	$ 3.50	$ 43,686	$ 21.00	$ 61,896	$ 29.76	$ 72,819	$ 35.01
3	$ 6,215	$ 2.99	$ 24,860	$ 11.95	$ 9,000	$ 4.33	$ 53,965	$ 25.94	$ 76,452	$ 36.76	$ 89,944	$ 43.24
4	$ 7,500	$ 3.61	$ 30,000	$ 14.42	$ 10,704	$ 5.15	$ 64,245	$ 30.89	$ 91,020	$ 43.76	$ 107,082	$ 51.48
5	$ 8,785	$ 4.22	$ 35,140	$ 16.89	$ 12,420	$ 5.97	$ 74,524	$ 35.83	$ 105,576	$ 50.76	$ 124,207	$ 59.71
6	$ 10,070	$ 4.84	$ 40,280	$ 19.37	$ 14,136	$ 6.80	$ 84,803	$ 40.77	$ 120,132	$ 57.76	$ 141,332	$ 67.95
7	$ 11,355	$ 5.46	$ 45,420	$ 21.84	$ 14,460	$ 6.95	$ 86,730	$ 41.70	$ 122,868	$ 59.07	$ 144,551	$ 69.50
8	$ 12,640	$ 6.08	$ 50,560	$ 24.31	$ 14,772	$ 7.10	$ 88,658	$ 42.62	$ 125,604	$ 60.39	$ 147,769	$ 71.04

"Hourly wage" is calcualted by asuming 2080 hours worked per year, per annual income noted.
Multiple wage earners could combine earnings to attain the noted household Income/hourly wage.

88% of Jobs in the ND labor market pay an average wage of $35/hour or less



Less than $15 / hr	$15 - $20 / hour	$20 - $28 / hour	$28 - $35 / hour	>$35 / hour
Child care worker	Home health/PT aide	Carpenter	School counselor	Engineer
Waiter/Waitress	Personal care aide	Loan processor	Rotary drill operator	Constr mgr
Dishwasher	Hair stylist	Legal secretary	HR specialist	Electrician
Bartender	Retail	Correctional officers	Accountant	Lineman
Fast food	Receptionist/secretary	Auto service tech	Real Estate Sales	Gen/Op mgr
Short order cook	Restaurant cook	Surgical tech	PR specialist	Loan officer
Cashiers	Preschool teacher	Roofer	Counselor	Lawyer
Hotel clerk	EMTs & paramedics	Lic Practical Nurse	Registered Nurse	Sales
Laundry/Dry cleaning	Assemblers	Dental assistant	Comp network specialist	Software dev
Maid/Housecleaner	Maintenance workers	Firefighter	Construction supervisor	Veterinarian
	Nursing assistant	Surgical assistant	Dental hygienist	Pharmacist
	Laborer	Clergy	Architectural drafter	Physician
	Substitute teacher	Social worker	Speech pathologist	Dentist
	Stocker/order filler	Police		Psychologist
	Landscaping/grounds	Hotel manager		
	Janitor	Truck driver		
48,790			**73,420**	**45,000**
# of people employed in a job with average wage of <$15/hour			*20%*	*12%*
represents 13% of total jobs	**90,050**	**109,930**		
	25%	*30%*		

Source: Job Service ND 2021 Employment and Wages by Occupation dataset | mean wage by occupation; 741,920 jobs included in statewide wage summary

TANF Standard of Need
(Monthly Benefit Level)

Caretakers	Children										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	$0	$166	$243	$316	$393	$466	$543	$617	$693	$767	$843
1	$237	$335	$436	$533	$632	$731	$830	$929	$1028	$1127	$1225
2	$335	$436	$533	$632	$731	$830	$929	$1028	$1127	$1225	$1325