

New Hampshire NOW
7 Colby Court
Unit 4-252
Bedford, NH 03110-6427



Re: HB 1728-FN-LOCAL

11 January 2006

Dear Health and Family Services and Elderly Affairs Committee Members,

I address you in the name of the New Hampshire chapter of the National Organization for Women and its members, to ask you to oppose HB 1728-FN-LOCAL, an act relative to time limits on eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

HB1728 does nothing to lift up those New Hampshire citizens who most need a helping hand. Rather, HB1728 presents people in need with a steeper hill to climb, and will surely result in families living in extreme poverty. HB1728 takes a punitive approach to address real life problems that real people, good people of New Hampshire face every day.

Low income women are especially affected by TANF restrictions and limitations. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR), research suggests that low-income mothers cannot afford the child care they would need in order to work full-time. Research also shows that many low-wage jobs available to women with few job-related skills are available either as part-time or part-year opportunities, or both. Dr. Lovell has pointed out that many jobs that low-income women are able to get are structured in such a way that they are almost impossible to hold on a permanent basis. These low-wage jobs often lack health benefits, paid sick leave, or a living wage that pays enough to keep a woman financially self-sufficient. Given that employment is not steady for low-income people and that most low-income mothers are unable to work for pay full-time and full-year, it is illogical and irresponsible for lawmakers to demand that mothers who are TANF recipients meet stricter guidelines and shorter time limits than those already required.

HB1728 creates additional burdens on the families who are struggling the hardest to get by. Rather than make their lives worse, why not look at positive change that will help lift them up, provide a better world for their children, give them the possibility of a secure and productive future, and help them leave the world of poverty behind for good. Punishing these families does no one any good.

Please oppose HB 1728-FN-LOCAL.

Thank you,

Kris Moody
President, New Hampshire NOW
National Organization for Women