

The States are facing tough financial situations. The General Accounting Office found that since January 2001, twenty-three States have made changes that would decrease the availability of child care assistance; while only nine States made changes that could increase child care availability.

I want to underscore this point.

According to the GAO, nearly half of the States are decreasing the availability of child care for working families. And this report may just be the tip of the iceberg. Federal funding is critical to reverse this trend.

My colleagues must understand the importance of this issue. By adopting this amendment, we can help families move off of welfare permanently. Or we can prevent them from needing welfare assistance in the first place.

I see this amendment not as a choice, but as a necessity. I urge my colleagues to support the Snowe-Dodd amendment, to support our working families and to support our youngest children.

I yield the floor.

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#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time under morning business has expired. Morning business is closed.

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#### PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EVERYONE ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 4, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4) to reauthorize and improve the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families, improve access to quality child care, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Grassley (for Snowe) amendment No. 2937, to provide additional funding for child care.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). Under the previous order, the time until 12:15 p.m. shall be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Utah is recognized.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today in support of H.R. 4, the Personal Responsibility and Individual Development for Everyone Act, called the PRIDE Act.

Throughout our Nation's history, we have seen wonderful examples of individuals, with a little drive and ambition, seizing one of the abundant opportunities this great Nation has to offer, and move, literally, from nothing in their pockets to a lifetime of incredible success.

That being said, up until 1996, this notion of America being "the land of opportunity" was nearly unknown to millions of welfare recipients who were

bogged down by the stifling, cash assistance welfare system our Nation had embraced for over 100 years.

With the enactment of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families legislation—we call it TANF—in 1996, that all changed. We offered individuals who had previously been shut out of the American dream the opportunity to eliminate poverty and move their families toward the empowering goal of self-sufficiency.

Welfare reform has been one of the most successful social policy reforms in U.S. history. We have seen millions of people focus their energies and efforts on their responsibilities and acquiring an attitude of providing for themselves. They have learned it by daily practice.

Nearly 3 million families have been lifted out of poverty. Employment by mothers most at risk to go on welfare has risen by 40 percent since 1995. Each of us in this body is encouraged to see the profound, positive effects TANF has had on the lives of those who require temporary assistance.

Caseloads are down 58 percent, and assistance recipients are working more than ever before. Thus, these hard-working people are leading themselves back to self-sufficiency.

As the Department of Health and Human Services has reported, welfare caseload reductions are primarily a result of implementing the welfare reforms contained in the original TANF legislation—and not merely due to the robust economy of the late 1990s.

I think we also need to recognize that the States themselves have held the key to the success of these programs by taking advantage of the flexibility built into the original TANF legislation.

Many States throughout the Nation have offered welfare plans and created specific, effective programs that are working well with their constituencies. The States' work has been well documented, as many States have reported caseload declines of over 70 percent since 1996.

TANF funds transferred by the States and used for childcare funding have also been an enormously positive development, and States are matching Federal spending in the area of childcare.

This is creating a good foundation where working parents can go back to work knowing that their children are being well cared for. I need only look to my home State of Utah to see the successes of the 1996 TANF law.

Since August of 1996, TANF rolls have decreased over 45 percent, while the quality and professional attention given to recipients has been steadily going up.

Utah has been a pioneer State in the development of personal, value-added attention and planning for those who are receiving assistance. Universal engagement of every assistance recipient is a necessity, and I applaud my home State of Utah for leading the way in

this area. I also thank Chairman GRASSLEY for putting the provision in the bill.

My home State has also pioneered work in the promotion of marriage and family formation. Under then-Governor Michael Leavitt, Utah was the first State in the Nation to form a commission on marriage, which was charged with the overreaching goal of strengthening marriages in Utah. I am pleased to see this bill includes \$200 million in matching grants for States to provide marriage promotion and responsible fatherhood programs.

The marriage unit is the most fundamental in society. If the bond of marriage weakens, so does our society, including the rising generation. It is widely recognized that a healthy, loving marriage between a man and a woman not only provides great personal happiness, it also creates the safest place for children to thrive and benefit from the full emotional, moral, and educational benefits that two married parents can provide.

I also commend President Bush for his commitment and efforts to strengthen healthy marriages.

Let me turn to another important component of the bill, the family self-sufficiency plan. Under current law, States are under no obligation to understand and assess the circumstances of each recipient receiving assistance. However, under the universal engagement provisions of this bill, it will be incumbent upon each State to meet with each recipient and create a plan, using all the support tools available to the State, to help the recipient achieve self-sufficiency.

This is a very important measure because it seeks to give each and every recipient a roadmap toward independence and success—a light at the end of the tunnel. It also signals to States that all TANF families deserve a chance to become self-sufficient and no one can be left to fall through the cracks in the system.

In Utah, I have seen that many of these parents, hard-working people, young and old, end up finding great self satisfaction in giving their gift of skill at work, at giving themselves to a task at hand so thoroughly that they have a meaningful relationship with their work. I think we will all agree that sometimes it is not easy to dive into your work with enthusiasm, but sometimes it is necessary and appropriate.

That is why it is so important that the work requirements are increased in this bill. The core work requirement is increased from 20 hours per week to 24 hours per week. Total hours required for a State to receive full credit increases from 30 hours per week to 34 hours per week for single-parent families. These are sensible, reasonable requirements.

Two-parent families will be required to work 39 hours per week, or 55 hours per week if they receive subsidized childcare. States will receive partial credit if individuals work 20 hours per