

MEETING MINUTES  
HUMAN SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE  
JANUARY 21, 1987

The meeting of the human services subcommittee on January 21, 1987 was called to order at 7:33 a.m. in room 108 of the state Capitol building by Chairman Cal Winslow.

ROLL CALL: All members of the committee were present.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES (15b:000)

EXECUTIVE ACTION

Emergency Medical Services

Personal Services

Sen Himsl made a motion to accept 8.2 FTE for 1988 and 1989.

A voice vote was taken and PASSED unanimously, with Rep Bradley absent.

Rep Connelly made a motion to accept LFA current level of \$220,924 for 1988 and \$220,910 for 1989.

A voice vote was taken and PASSED unanimously, with Rep Bradley absent.

Operating Expenses

Sen Manning made a motion to accept the executive of \$271,196 for 1988 and \$271,014 for 1989.

A voice vote was taken and PASSED unanimously, with Rep Bradley absent.

Equipment

Rep Connelly made a motion to accept \$5,000 each year of the biennium.

A voice vote was taken and PASSED unanimously, with Rep Bradley absent.

Health Planning Bureau

Modified Request - Division Administration

(15b:300) Sen Manning made a motion to accept the modified request of .75 FTE for 1988 and 1989.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

Modified Request - Health Planning Bureau

Rep Connelly made a motion to accept the modification request of \$176,106 for 1988 and \$170,483 for 1989.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

Personal Services

Rep Switzer made a motion to accept 5.5 FTE in 1988 and 1989.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

Operating Expenses

Sen Manning made a motion to accept the LFA current level of \$37,427 for 1988 and \$37,738 for 1989 with adjustments as needed by the staff.

(15b:376) Sen Hims1 made a substitute motion to accept the executive at \$34,530 for 1988 and \$28,915 for 1989.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

Equipment

(15b:417) Sen Harding made a motion to accept the LFA current level of \$591 each year.

A voice vote was taken and PASSED, with Rep Bradley, Rep Winslow, and Sen Hims1 voting no.

Funding

Rep Bradley made a motion to accept the executive level of \$209,575 for 1988 and \$204,005 as adjusted.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

Licensing and Certification Bureau

Modified Request - FTE

(15b:661) Sen Manning made a motion to accept the modified request of 9.5 FTE for 1988 and 1989.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

Personal Services

(16a:000) Sen Manning made a motion to accept the LFA current level of 16.05 for 1988 and 1989.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

Sen Manning made a motion to accept the LFA current level of \$443,143 for 1988 and \$443,303 for 1989 as adjusted.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

#### Operating Expenses

Sen Himsl made a motion to accept the executive at \$131,702 for 1988 and \$131,619 for 1989, with possible adjustment for indirects.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

#### Equipment

Rep Bradley made a motion to accept the executive of \$1,374 for 1988 and \$500 for 1989.

#### Funding

Rep Switzer made a motion to accept the LFA funding of \$593,449 for 1988 and \$592,798 for 1989.

A voice vote was taken and the motion PASSED unanimously.

#### DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES (DSRS)

(16a:072) Lee Tickell, administrator of the Economic Assistance Division (EA), presented a random selection of clientele on the State Medical Program. His presentation will be typed, including information on their general assistance status, and given to the committee.

(16a:140) In response to a question from Chairman Winslow, Mr. Tickell replied that in counties that are not state assumed, the providers of services could be reimbursed to some extent by the county, with the state not participating in the payment.

Discussion followed on emergency treatment, preauthorized non-emergency treatment, eligibility requirements, and income level qualifications.

Chairman Winslow questioned if the state medical fund was an insurance coverage program for qualified unemployed people with no income. Mr. Tickell stated that was correct.

Mr. Tickell, in response to an inquiry from Sen Himsl, replied the 12 assumed counties represent 55 - 60% of the caseload in AFDC and Medicaid and 90% of the general assistance caseload.

(16a:260) Mr. Tickell then covered the Non Resident General Assistance Program. A \$150,000 supplemental request was presented for this program, which includes an injury sustained by a nonresident while in Montana at a cost of \$116,000. This program does not cover illness, only accidental injury. The account has been occasionally used for transportation to get a nonresident through the state and thus avoid their becoming recipients of the state general assistance program. For transportation costs of non residents, the program can only spend up to the appropriated level, after which counties are not reimbursed for expenses. The state is obligated in all 56 counties (MCA 53-307 sec 2) to provide this program.

In response to a question by Rep Bradley, Mr. Tickell stated services would have been provided if the program were not available, and providers possibly reimbursed by the county, who would in turn submit a claim to the state for reimbursement as funds became available.

(16a:385) Mr. Tickell then presented the Solar Bank Program, (exhibit 2) which helps low income people reduce energy costs by repairing or replacing faulty heating systems. This is 100% federal funded. Spending authority is being requested if future funds are made available.

Jim Smith, Human Resource Development Council (HRDC), at Rep Bradley's request, noted client's have difficulty coming up with their 50% of the funds required. Funds have been carried over since 1985. Regulations have been refined to try to include more people who would be able to participate on this program.

(16a:546) Mrs. Patty Callaghan, from Glendive HRDC, injected that they have a program whereby the clients can borrow the needed 50% from utility companies; providing the incentive to participate on the program.

Discussion followed covering relaxation of the requirements for weatherization funds for the buy-down for this program.

(16a:581) Mr. Tickell then covered the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), which benefits people below the poverty level through food banks, distribution of surplus commodities, day care, emergency assistance such as transportation and housing (exhibit 3).

Lee Stevenson, from Opportunities Inc., Great Falls, noted that in the last three (3) years, the new clientele are unemployed people who had been working 25 to 30 years, their unemployment has run out, but because they do have some assets, they are not eligible for state general assistance.

(16b:015) Rep Connelly asked for clarification of the 5% discretionary spending money. Mr. Tickell stated the grant money is received by the state, and under federal regulations the state can retain 5% of the grant at the state level for administration and 5% may be used at the state's discretion for any program that reduces the causes of poverty. 90% of the grant must go to the HRDC's. The state can transfer up to 95% of the funds to the HRDC's, which they have done historically.

The next program discussed was the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP), and Mr. Tickell elaborated on exhibit 5. This program helps low income people meet some of the costs of home heating by making payments on their heating bills. The average payment is \$439 in FY 87 for a nine (9) month period.

Discussion followed on anticipated level of funding, expended level of funding, funds from the Exxon overcharge and stripper wells.

(16b:173) Peter Blouke handed out three (3) budget options the committee could consider for LIEAP funds (exhibit 5a, 5b, 5c). Option one (1) reflects no changes in the current policy; option two (2) is a 5% provision of transfer to weatherization instead of 8.6%; and option three (3) retains the 8.6% provision of transfer.

Discussion followed on the options submitted and the ramifications of the various scenarios they presented.

(16b:378) Rep Switzer asked if there were statistics providing information on the savings of this program. Jim Smith stated 2,000 homes are done a year, with an average savings 13.5% per month. The cap for weatherization is \$1,600 per home inclusive of labor and the best materials they can find. In 1983 there were 49,000 homes where eligible people were living.

Dave Lewis, DSRS, stated the department's position was to retain the 8.6% provision of transfer to weatherization from LIEAP funds.

(16b:548) Next the Food Distribution Program Summary was covered briefly by Mr. Tickell (exhibit 6).

Mr. Tickell then presented an overview of the Family Assistance Management Information System (FAMIS), a computer based network of terminals and programs (exhibit 7). It is an automated, on-line eligibility determination system for Eligibility Technicians. The three main reasons for implementation of this system are: timely eligibility determination which would result in timely payments of bills from medical providers; reduction of future staff growth, and reduction of fraud, waste, and abuse in the programs.

(16b:655) Jerry Lester, Office of Family Assistance, Denver Regional Office, gave a federal overview of the system and its functions. Federal participation in the program is 90% for the development, implementation, and operations of the on line data base system, and promised support from the Regional Office level. Programs developed and implemented by other states can be transferred to Montana, limiting program costs for the state.

(17a:147) Chairman Winslow asked if the computers requested by the different departments via federal funds would interface. Mr. Lester stated there is no coordination of federal departments where an integrated mainframe system is concerned.

(17a:204) Chairman Winslow asked Mr. Tickell to reiterate on the ramifications of implementing this system. Mr. Tickell stated eligibility determination on a client would be established sooner, resulting in that information being available for the fiscal intermediaries, resulting in a more efficient flow of payments to providers for outstanding bills on these clients.

In response to a question from Sen Himsel, Mr. Tickell stated information from Employment Security wages paid file, employment insurance file, IRS and state revenue files, would be available for the eligibility technicians and those within the laws of administrative confidentiality.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:14 a.m. (17a:346)



Cal Winslow, Chairman

DAILY ROLL CALL

HUMAN SERVICES SUB COMMITTEE

50th LEGISLATIVE SESSION -- 1987

Date Jan 21, 1987

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Rep. Cal Winslow, Chairman	X		
Sen. Richard Manning, Vice Chair	X		
Sen. Ethel Harding	X		
Sen. Matt Himsel	X		
Rep. Dorothy Bradley	X		
Rep. Mary Ellen Connelly	X		
Rep. Dean Switzer	X		

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES  
Economic Assistance Division

*of Exhibit 1*  
*1-21-87*

NON RESIDENT GENERAL ASSISTANCE

Provided by County Offices of Human Services or Departments of Public Welfare in all 56 counties.

Appropriation from general fund for:

FY 86	\$30,000 ✓	General Fund
FY 87	\$30,000 ✓	

Services Provided: Assistance is provided to persons traveling through the State and faced with lack of resources to return to their state of origin or destination. These funds are available to all counties only for transportation or for treatment of accidental injury while in the State. Lodging and meals or treatment for illness can be provided by State administered counties from general assistance or State medical funds. State supervised counties supply these services from County poor funds.

Rationale: Persons unable to reach their homes or destinations due to unforeseen circumstances should be helped, as a humanitarian gesture, to reach their destination. Secondly, assistance prevents such transient persons from being forced to stay in the State without resources, becoming eligible for more expensive State assistance.

The \$30,000 appropriated for FY 86 was expended by early June.

Statistics other than total cost have not been tallied for this program.

A supplemental request has been made to cover costs of an accidental injury in Cascade County in May of 1986. Costs to date for that case are approximately \$115,000.

SUPPLEMENTAL REQUEST

FY86 Obligations	\$ 70,000
FY87 Costs	<u>80,000</u>
Total Supplemental	<u>\$150,000</u>



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES  
Economic Assistance Division

EXHIBIT 2  
DATE 1.21.87  
HB \_\_\_\_\_

SOLAR BANK

- Purpose: To help low income people reduce energy costs by repairing or replacing faulty heating systems.
- Program Operation: Designed to "buy down" one-half of the principal of no-interest loans offered by state's regulated utilities to facilitate furnace repair/replacements. Low income clients are responsible for the other half of the loan. We expect to serve 50 clients through 1987. Clients apply at local HRDC's.
- Funding Source: 100% federal (Department of Housing and Urban Development)

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES  
Economic Assistance Division

EXHIBIT 3

DATE 1-21-87

HB \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)

- Purpose: To address the causes of poverty at the local level.
- Beneficiaries: Persons below the poverty level.
- Program Operation: By state and federal law, program is contracted to local Human Resource Development Council. Each HRDC has a Board of Directors which formulates an annual work plan to address locally recognized problems of poverty.
- HRDC's provide a variety of services and activities having a measurable and potentially major impact on the causes of poverty.
- Local HRDC's are:
- Action for Eastern Montana, Glendive
  - District IV HRDC, Havre
  - Opportunities, Inc., Great Falls
  - District VI HRDC, Lewistown
  - District VII HRDC, Billings
  - Rocky Mountain Development Council, Helena
  - District IX HRDC, Bozeman
  - Northwest Montana HRDC, Kalispell
  - District XI HRDC, Missoula
  - District XII HRDC, Butte
- Funds are distributed through a formula based on each area's proportion of the state's low income and total population. All agencies receive a base grant.
- Examples of services are establishment of Food Banks, distribution of surplus commodities, provision of day care for low-income working mothers, provision of emergency assistance such as transportation and housing.
- Funding Source: 100% federal (Department of Health and Human Services)

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES  
Economic Assistance Division

EXHIBIT 4  
DATE 1.21.87  
HB \_\_\_\_\_

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE

Purpose: To conserve energy and enable Low-Income people to reduce energy costs.

Beneficiaries: Households below 125% poverty (currently \$13,750 for a family of four). In FY87 an estimated 3,000 homes will be weatherized.

Program Operation: Contracted with state's HRDCs. Eligible households receive an energy audit which determines what work will be done. Potential measures include:

1. Caulking
2. Insulation
3. Heating system inspection and modification
4. Trailer Skirting
5. Storm windows/doors
6. Incidental repair.

Homes are done as they advance to the top of a priority list which establishes preference for the elderly, handicapped and high energy consuming homes.

No more than \$1,600 average per home may be expended.

Funding Source: 100% federal (Department of Energy)

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICES  
Economic Assistance Division

EXHIBIT 5  
DATE 1.21.87  
HE \_\_\_\_\_

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIEAP)

Purpose: To help low income people meet some of the costs of home heating by making payments on their heating bills.

Beneficiaries: Households below 125% of poverty (family of four can not exceed \$13,750). Approximately 47,340 households are eligible. In FY87 an estimated 23,000 households will receive assistance. Approximately 45% will have incomes below \$4,000.

How benefits are calculated: Households receive assistance varying according to their:

1. Income
2. Type of fuel
3. Size of home
4. Type of home
5. Family size
6. Geographic location

Average payment in FY 87 is \$439.

Usually, payments are made directly to client's fuel vendor. Emergency assistance of up to \$250 is also available to meet unexpected situations.

Local Administering Agency :

In most counties, clients apply at the Human Resource Development Council, although some County Welfare Departments and an Area Agency on Aging are used.

Funding Source: 100% federal (Department of Health/Human Services)

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUNDS AND EXPENDITURES FOR  
 FISCAL 1986 THROUGH THE 1989 BIENNIUM

OPTION 1

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUNDS AND EXPENDITURES FOR  
 FISCAL 1986 THROUGH THE 1989 BIENNIUM

FUNDS AVAILABLE	Fiscal 1986	Fiscal 1987	Fiscal 1988	Fiscal 1989
Grants	\$11,665,225	\$11,035,480	\$11,035,480	\$11,035,480
Carryover	\$1,893,803	\$2,169,198	\$1,952,559	\$1,318,182
Oil Overcharge Funds	\$0	\$664,268		
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$13,559,028</b>	<b>\$13,868,946</b>	<b>\$12,988,039</b>	<b>\$12,353,662</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Transfer Developmental Dis	\$1,169,310	\$1,103,548	\$1,103,548	\$1,103,548
State Admin	\$492,277	\$492,277	\$492,277	\$492,277
Local Admin	\$535,668	\$500,916	\$535,668	\$535,668
Fuel Assistance Grants	\$9,189,312	\$9,470,595	\$9,189,312	\$9,189,312
Weatherization	\$669,963	\$949,051	\$949,051	\$1,003,209
Refunds	(\$666,700)	(\$600,000)	(\$600,000)	(\$700,000)
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$11,389,830</b>	<b>\$11,916,387</b>	<b>\$11,669,856</b>	<b>\$11,624,014</b>
Ending Fund Balance	\$2,169,198	\$1,952,559	\$1,318,182	\$729,648
Required 1st Quarter Carryover		\$1,076,606	\$1,076,606	\$1,076,606
Balance		\$875,953	\$241,576	(\$346,958)

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. Except for the additional grant funds targeted for indian reservations, there would be no change in the level of fuel assistance grants awarded or in the requirement that 8.6 percent of the total LIEAP grant be used for the weatherization program.

EXHIBIT 5B  
 DATE 1-21-86

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUNDS AND EXPENDITURES FOR  
 FISCAL 1986 THROUGH THE 1989 BIENNIUM

OPTION 2

FUNDS AVAILABLE	Fiscal 1986	Fiscal 1987	Fiscal 1988	Fiscal 1989
Grants	\$11,665,225	\$11,035,480	\$11,035,480	\$11,035,480
Carryover	\$1,893,803	\$2,169,198	\$2,349,836	\$2,112,737
Oil Overcharge Funds	\$0	\$664,268		
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$13,559,028</b>	<b>\$13,868,946</b>	<b>\$13,385,316</b>	<b>\$13,148,217</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Transfer Developmental Dis	\$1,169,310	\$1,103,548	\$1,103,548	\$1,103,548
State Admin	\$492,277	\$492,277	\$492,277	\$492,277
Local Admin	\$535,668	\$500,916	\$535,668	\$535,668
Fuel Assistance Grants	\$9,189,312	\$9,470,595	\$9,189,312	\$9,189,312
Weatherization	\$669,963	\$551,774	\$551,774	\$551,774
Refunds	(\$666,700)	(\$600,000)	(\$600,000)	(\$700,000)
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$11,389,830</b>	<b>\$11,519,110</b>	<b>\$11,272,579</b>	<b>\$11,172,579</b>
Ending Fund Balance	\$2,169,198	\$2,349,836	\$2,112,737	\$1,975,638
Required 1st Quarter Carryover		\$1,076,606	\$1,076,606	\$1,076,606
Balance		\$1,273,230	\$1,036,131	\$899,032

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. Fiscal 1988 and 1989 fuel assistance grants would remain at the fiscal 1986 level. Fiscal 1987 fuel assistance grants would include oil overcharge funds targeted for indian reservations.
2. The requirement that 8.6 percent of the total LIEAP be used for weatherization that was incorporated in the 1987 biennium appropriation bill would be reduced to 5 percent of the total grant award.

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T-21-86

LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUNDS AND EXPENDITURES FOR  
FISCAL 1986 THROUGH THE 1989 BIENNIUM

OPTION 3

FUNDS AVAILABLE	Fiscal 1986	Fiscal 1987	Fiscal 1988	Fiscal 1989
Grants	\$11,665,225	\$11,035,480	\$11,035,480	\$11,035,480
Carryover	\$1,893,803	\$2,169,198	\$1,952,559	\$1,616,661
Oil Overcharge Funds	\$0	\$664,268		
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$13,559,028</b>	<b>\$13,868,946</b>	<b>\$12,988,039</b>	<b>\$12,652,141</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Transfer Developmental Dis	\$1,169,310	\$1,103,548	\$1,103,548	\$1,103,548
State Admin	\$492,277	\$492,277	\$492,277	\$492,277
Local Admin	\$535,668	\$500,916	\$535,668	\$535,668
Fuel Assistance Grants	\$9,189,312	\$9,470,595	\$8,890,833	\$8,890,833
Weatherization	\$669,963	\$949,051	\$949,051	\$1,003,209
Refunds	(\$666,700)	(\$600,000)	(\$600,000)	(\$600,000)
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$11,389,830</b>	<b>\$11,916,387</b>	<b>\$11,371,377</b>	<b>\$11,425,535</b>
Ending Fund Balance	\$2,169,198	\$1,952,559	\$1,616,661	\$1,226,606
Required 1st Quarter Carryover		\$1,076,606	\$1,076,606	\$1,076,606
Balance		\$875,953	\$540,055	\$150,000

ASSUMPTIONS:

1. The requirement that 8.6 percent of the total LIEAP grant award be used for weatherization would be continued for the 1989 biennium.
2. An equal reduction would be made in the fiscal 1988 and 1989 fuel assistance grant to ensure a minimum carryover balance of \$150,000 at the end of the 1989 biennium.

EXHIBIT 6  
DATE 1-21-87  
HB \_\_\_\_\_

Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services  
Economic Assistance Division

FOOD DISTRIBUTION  
PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Food Distribution Section is responsible for the distribution of commodities to eligible participants on Indian Reservations, Nutritional Programs for the Elderly, Charitable Institutions, non-residential child care facilities, and the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program in accordance with state law and applicable Federal regulations.

Program Elements

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM

The Charitable Institutions Program provides price-support commodities (primarily grain and dairy products) to nursing homes, state-operated institutions, DD group homes, Job Corps and detoxification centers, and aftercare group homes.

Contracting Agencies:	121
Meals Served:	5,641,440
FFY 1986 Food Value:	\$709,771
Pounds of Food:	962,395
Funding Source:	100% State

SUMMER CAMPS FOR CHILDREN

The Summer Camp Program provides price-support foods to non-profit, tax-exempt organizations which operate summer camps for persons seventeen years of age or younger.

Summer Camps FFY 86:	82
Meals Served:	363,738
FFY 1986 Food Value:	\$45,716
Pounds of Food:	55,746
Funding Source:	100% State

CHILD CARE FEEDING PROGRAM

The Child Care Program provides dairy items purchased as price supports by the USDA to non-residential Child Care facilities licensed by the Department of Health.

Sponsoring Agencies:	80
Subsites:	586
FFY 86 food Value:	\$158,453
Pounds of Food:	130,004
Funding Source:	100% State



EXHIBIT 6  
DATE 1-21-80  
HB \_\_\_\_\_

**NUTRITIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY**

This program orders, stores, and ships USDA commodities to aging sites statewide where the food is prepared for congregate feeding situations. Participating agencies are awarded an annual cash entitlement based on the number of meals served. The entitlement may be received in cash, be used to purchase commodities at the USDA value, or in a combination.

Meals served annually: 1,550,000  
FFY 86 Food Value: \$372,531  
Pounds of Food: 612,748  
Funding Source: 75%, Federal; 25% State

**FOOD DISTRIBUTION ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS**

The FDIR Program provides USDA donated foods to needy households on all seven Indian reservations in Montana. Eligible Households have the option of participating in this program or in the Food Stamp Program.

Clients served monthly: 7200  
FFY 86 Food Value: \$2,364,285  
Pounds of Food: 5,178,593  
Funding Source: 100% Federal

**TEMPORARY EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

TEFAP provides needy families with supplemental surplus commodities distributed nationwide by the USDA.

Monthly Participation: 68,000\*  
FFY 86 Food Value: \$3,295,268\*\*  
Pounds of Food: 3,466,204\*\*  
Funding Source: 100% Federal

\* Montana's previous allocations of TEFAP foods have enabled the program to provide partial TEFAP food benefits to 68,000 Montanans monthly. The projected increases in TEFAP foods over the next calendar year will enable Food Distribution to provide greatly enhanced food benefits to an estimated 85,000 persons.

\*\* It is projected that the tonnage and value of TEFAP foods available to the state during the next calendar year will double, thus enabling Food Distribution to enhance the provision of food benefits to a greater number of Montana residents.

TOTAL FOOD VALUE FFY 1986: \$6,950,974  
POUNDS OF FOOD FFY 1986: 10,405,690

7.21.87

Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services  
Economic Assistance Division  
FAMIS  
A Brief Overview

The Family Assistance Management Information System (FAMIS) is a computer based network of terminals and programs which reduce the likelihood of persons receiving welfare benefits they are not entitled to.

When applicants apply for assistance in the counties, an Eligibility Technician keys the Social Security number and some basic information about the client into a terminal. The terminal which is hooked into the states computer determines if the client is already on assistance in another county or is on a program that would effect the Eligibility Technicians decision about the application the client is now making. Employment and wage records, unemployment benefits, Social Security benefits and others are searched by the computer and made available to the Technician on the computer terminal while the Technician and applicant are still going over the applicants possible eligibility.

The system leads the Technician through a series of questions which, when the answers are given, allows the system to help the Technician make a decision about whether the applicant is eligible for benefits. It does all the mathematical calculations internally and can significantly reduce errors.

When a person is declared eligible the data is immediately available for use to pay medical bills and to issue checks or other benefits. This will enhance provider relations by providing timely payment of medical bills. Accountability is greatly enhanced.

Suspense files which advise Technicians of events in the clients life which will affect eligibility are stored internally and an Eligibility Technician is required to acknowledge these items about work that is outstanding, and must be completed by the Technician to insure proper continuing eligibility, on a regular basis.

The system allows workers to do more indepth interviewing of clients to ensure that the client is eligible while freeing the Technician of having to manually search out records from the other agencies to compare the accuracy of the clients statement. It also removes a tremendous amount of paperwork while speeding up eligibility determination greatly. This will also reduce the need for additional eligibility workers in the future.

The system would be prohibitively expensive if a state had to go out and totally build it from scratch. The federal government has established a transfer program whereby a state can take a system that exists in another state and modify it to meet that states needs with 90% federal funds and 10% state funds.

The system exists in North Dakota, South Dakota and many other states. Other state's FAMIS system are being modified to meet the needs of Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and other states currently. Our plan is to select the version which most closely meets our needs, have a contractor install it to our specifications and to purchase the terminals necessary for the Eligibility Technicians and run the system using the state Department of Administrations Computer and telecommunications network.

VISITORS' REGISTER

HUMAN SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_

DATE

Jan 21, 1987

SPONSOR \_\_\_\_\_

DEPT \_\_\_\_\_

NAME (please print)	Representing	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
Lois SPENBECK	OBPP		
<del>Patricia Callaghan</del> Patricia Callaghan	HRAC - Gladie		
Jerry LESTER	DHHS/OFA		

IF YOU CARE TO WRITE COMMENTS, ASK SECRETARY FOR WITNESS STATEMENT FORM.

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY.