

House Committee on Human Services and Housing

February 25, 2015

HB 2029

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the committee;

Thank you. I'm here to speak in favor of the TANF program, which made difference in my life and in my ability to become financially independent. At the time that I was enrolled in TANF, I had three children at home, and I couldn't get a stable job because I didn't have a high school diploma. I received TANF several times over the course of five years, and it was especially helpful when I returned to school to earn my GED.

TANF was a big help. The \$600 a month that I received in addition to food stamps was the only income I had. It allowed me to pay for rent and utilities, and I was able to feed my family. There were months when I needed to access other services, since the \$600 a month and food stamps did not provide for diapers, hygiene products, letting my teenage daughter have fun with her friends as well as other activities for my children.

The best part was that TANF helped me get into the JOBS program, which taught me job readiness skills. The JOBS program led me to 211info. I've been working for 211info for five years. I've developed new skills, and my work is important. I make \$15.35 an hour, which allows me to support my two children who are still at home. Even with my job, I still rely on the state to help with my children's health care.

I support House Bill 2029 and increasing the amount it would give to clients.

Sincerely,



Nickolynn Nixon