



**Oregon Business Council Poverty Reduction Task Force Statement Supporting
DHS TANF Self Sufficiency Budget
SB 5526**

The Oregon Business Council Poverty Reduction Task Force promotes policy initiatives with the goal of reducing Oregon's poverty rate to less than 10 percent by 2020. In the 2015 Legislative Session, business leaders and nonprofit partners recommended that, as the economy recovered and TANF caseloads declined, the state should re-invest some of the savings into the program. In response, the legislature reformed rules that mitigated the so-called "benefit cliff" and made other program changes to smooth the transition from welfare to work for low-income families and children.

The Task Force's 2015 advocacy came out of an understanding that the TANF program plays a critical role in the safety net. Oregon's program was more responsive to families in need during the last recession than TANF programs operated in many other states. As lawmakers work to balance the budget in this current session, they should maintain a well-functioning TANF program that— together with the SNAP, ERDC, and EITC programs—forms an effective safety net to stabilize the most vulnerable families and give them an opportunity to succeed.¹

¹ *State of the States: The Poverty and Inequality Report*. 2015. Special issue of *Pathways*. Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality. http://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/SOTU_2015.pdf