



# Good Faith Communities Coalition

Taking action on homelessness and affordable housing with and for the poor in the District of Columbia

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May 1, 2016

Today, one in four DC children live in poverty - less than \$24,000 a year for a family of four. In the poorest neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River, the figure is closer to one in two children living in poverty. For these children, the District's safety net programs, many supported by faith communities, are a lifeline ensuring that basic needs are met. Basic needs often include food for tonight's dinner.



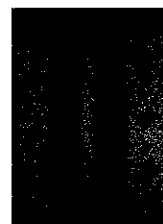
When families are in crisis, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program can provide 60 months of minimal cash assistance (\$441 a month for a family of three), job training and other services to sustain the family while adults prepare for work. TANF is the only cash assistance program for poor DC families. Currently, 17,000 DC families are in the TANF program. More than 6,000 TANF families with over 13,000 children will age out of the

program in October 2016.

**The DC time limit for TANF support is rigid: 60 months. Across the US 44 states allow extensions and exemptions. DC's program needs to be restructured so that, while maintaining a time limit, exemptions and extensions based on clearly defined needs such as mental and physical disability, domestic violence, homelessness and other barriers to employment, are allowed.**

Under consideration at the Council for FY 2017 .....

- The Mayor's FY 2017 budget proposes one year of reduced TANF benefits for those families aging out of TANF in October 2016: \$165 per month for a family of three. Ten million dollars are included for this additional year. The Mayor proposes to use the additional year for planning.
- Legislation (*District of Columbia Public Assistance Amendment Act of 2015*) co-introduced in December by six Councilmembers modifies the TANF structure to provide extensions with full benefits for parents and their children who face clearly defined barriers. This legislation is based on best practices in 44 states.



## Recommendation.....

Virtually all DC advocacy groups working in social services including Good Faith recommend implementing this year the Council-introduced legislation.

The Children's Law Center sums up their support: "Passing this reform is the right thing to do and smart public policy."

Let elected officials hear from you....



Let the Council chairman and the Mayor know what you think! Full list of Council members and contact information [here](#).

If each person receiving this newsletter sent an email supporting the Council legislation and its funding to the Council Chairman and the Mayor, they would receive 700 emails from interested and supportive people. It would make an IMPACT.

Temporary housing for families in neighborhoods UPDATE.....

The Council has not taken action on either the motion to approve all locations or on the individual contracts. The Mayor has responded to Council questions on locations and financing. Council Chairman Mendelson promises action before the Council recesses for the summer. The Mayor is proceeding with design for each project.

Good Faith testified at the council hearing on the temporary housing for families proposal. [Good Faith testimony](#).

**Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten - Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

**Good Faith Communities Coalition**

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