

**Testimony of the  
Department of Health and Human Services**

**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services**

**Neither For Nor Against LD 256**

**An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families**

**Sponsored by: Representative Beaudoin**

**Hearing Date: March 7, 2013**

Senator Craven, Representative Farnsworth and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Dale Denno, Director of the Office for Family Independence. I am here today to speak neither for nor against LD 256.

The Department recognizes and supports the principles embedded in LD 256. However, federal regulations already govern work participation requirements for TANF recipients. TANF recipients who are considered to be “work eligible” must participate in work activities at least 30 hours per week. Except for certain categories; e.g., a parent caring for a disabled child or a disabled recipient, these work requirements are mandatory. Failure to participate in required work activities risks loss of TANF benefits.

Below are some examples of work activities that are countable under federal rules:

- Employment/Self-employment
- Attendance at college classes
- Community service, volunteering, field placement
- Adult education, GED or High School Completion, Certificate Training, or ESL courses
- Documented job search activities

Municipalities are free under State law to impose “workfare” requirements for General Assistance applicants, distinct and separate from the federal rules governing the TANF program. The Department supports the concept of workfare within the General Assistance program, but wishes to clarify that work requirements already exist within the TANF program.

While the Department supports the intent of LD 256, the proposal would appear to overlap with current federal work requirements under the TANF program.

For the stated reasons, the Department is neither for nor against LD 256.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have and to make myself available for questions at the work session.