

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



Office of the Director  
October 21, 2016

Dear TANF Working Group Members,

As the nation reflects on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of federal Welfare Reform, and we take account of the lessons learned nationally and in the District, we have a unique and important opportunity to shape a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) policy that meets the needs of District families. We are grateful to be working in collaboration with you to lay the foundation for a policy that is informed by these lessons, as well as your expertise, and the reality that families in the District face.

As a result of your efforts, I am pleased to share the attached report, *Recommendations for Development of a TANF Hardship Extension Policy for Washington, DC*, created by the TANF Working Group and submitted to me earlier this week. Thank you for your participation, input and comments to the report. The recommendations of the Working Group will strongly influence our work going forward.

As the *Executive Summary* states, this report documents the recommendations, deliberations, and stakeholder feedback for developing a hardship extension policy and related improvements to the District of Columbia's TANF program. What is clear from the report you created together, is the careful and deliberate approach to ensuring the values we share as a community are reflected in the policy recommendations you brought forward: that the enrichment, security and wellbeing of children is paramount to the foundation of any TANF policy; that services to parents should increase economic stability and independence for families through access to meaningful education and employment participation, and that there are clear protections in place to support our most vulnerable families.

Thank you again, for your time, expertise, and partnership. I look forward to exploring these recommendations with you further, and together, using these recommendations as the foundation for crafting and implementing a new, comprehensive TANF policy for the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Laura Green Zeilinger', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Laura Green Zeilinger