



James H. Douglas
Governor of Vermont
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Joe Manchin III
Governor of West Virginia
Vice Chair

Raymond C. Scheppach
Executive Director

March 3, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Madam Speaker, Mr. Boehner, Senator Reid and Senator McConnell:

On behalf of the nation's governors, we are writing to urge your support in extending the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Emergency Contingency Fund (TANF ECF).

Enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the TANF ECF is a \$5 billion fund to help states provide greater support to children and families during the economic downturn. The fund reimburses states for 80% of their increased expenditures, and is set to expire on September 30th of this year.

As soon as the Department of Health and Human Services finalized its rules for drawing down the fund and ensuring transparency and accountability, states began utilizing the fund to help speed economic recovery through subsidized employment and training programs, and vital financial and supportive service offerings for needy families facing increased hardship. Currently, 23 states are drawing down the fund for subsidized jobs, with several more state applications pending approval. Many of these programs take time to develop and implement, and by allowing states more time to access these funds, Congress can help maximize the impact of the TANF ECF in providing crucial skill development and training to our workers.

We urge you to support extending the TANF ECF. This extension will allow us to capitalize on the resources made available in ARRA to best serve children and families, and help rebuild our nation's economy.

Sincerely,

Governor M. Michael Rounds
Chair
Health and Human Services Committee

Governor Chester J. Culver
Vice Chair
Health and Human Services Committee