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December 22, 2011

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**TANF Program Set To Expire Dec. 31 Due to Congressional Impasse**  
*APHSA Urges Congress to Prevent Unnecessary Burden on States and Families*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, which provides block grants to states to help fund employment services and supports to needy families, was among the items left unaddressed by Congress in its current impasse, leaving the states without funding after December 31 unless special action is taken. The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), which represents the state agencies that administer human service programs, today called on Congressional leadership to do whatever is necessary to extend the program into 2012.

Under current law, TANF authorization expires December 31 and while both the House and the Senate took action this month toward extending the program, the issue was not resolved before members left town. The House passed the Welfare Integrity and Data Improvement Act (HR 3659) on December 15. That bill would extend the TANF authorization until September 30, 2012. It was expected that the Senate would also pass that bill before adjourning. Instead, the Senate inserted a two month extension in the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act (HR 3630) which now appears doubtful to pass either.

In a letter to Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), APHSA Executive Director Tracy Wareing stated that failure to act penalizes state governments and millions of needy Americans who are working to achieve self sufficiency. If TANF authorization expires, more than 4.5 million Americans could be directly affected through disruption of a number of programs, including programs for children.

“Because many states use federal TANF funds to support their child care (enabling parents to work) and child welfare programs (keeping children safe at home), those programs will be threatened as well,” Wareing wrote. “This lapse in federal funding will be extremely difficult if not impossible for states to cover while waiting for Congress to act when it returns in January.”

Many states use TANF dollars to fund much of the preventative work done by child welfare programs and TANF funds can constitute a major portion of their child welfare and child care budgets. States can transfer up to 30% of their TANF funds into the child care block grant and social services block grant. The letter noted that those funds would no longer be available to states if authorization expires. The states would then have to either pay directly for all programs from their own budgets or curtail or eliminate services until Congress acts.

“Asking the states to cover the loss of federal funding for such critical programs with virtually no notice is simply unconscionable for our already cash-strapped states, and jeopardizes essential support for the millions of Americans who can least afford it,” Wareing wrote. “It is with the upmost urgency that APHSA request that the House and Senate do whatever is necessary to prevent the TANF program from expiring. There can be no more urgent need during this holiday season than to ensure the well being of millions of our most venerable citizens who rely on TANF and the programs it funds.”

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### ***About APHSA***

APHSA is a bipartisan, nonprofit organization representing appointed state health and human service agency commissioners—the nation’s top government human service executives from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the territories—and their key state program managers, plus hundreds of county-level directors of human services throughout the nation—for the exchange of knowledge, data, best practices, policy review and development, networking and advocacy. APHSA’s mission is to pursue excellence in health and human services by supporting state and local agencies, informing policymakers, and working with our partners to drive innovative, integrated and efficient solutions in policy and practice.