



Brookings News Release

Mayors Respond to Administration's Welfare and Working Family Proposals

*Results from 31 Survey Cities to be Released at
Media And Policy Briefing*

**Monday, May 5, 2003
12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

Falk Auditorium
The Brookings Institution
1775 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington DC

Mayors from across the United States respond to the Administration's welfare and working family proposals in a new report to be released May 5 at a media and policy luncheon briefing from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. at the Brookings Institution Falk Auditorium, 1775 Massachusetts Ave., NW.

The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, the National League of Cities and the United States Conference of Mayors, joined forces to examine mayors' views on:

- The Bush administration's proposed changes in work requirements for recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and child care block grants;
- The impact of the 1996 welfare reform law on cities; and
- The effect of state budget decisions on services for working poor families.

"The vast majority of mayors do not control decisions about TANF welfare and working family policies, yet they are significantly impacted by decisions made by the Administration and Congress," says Margy Waller, a Brookings visiting fellow who authored the report. "It's very important to get the mayors' perspective on how welfare policy has changed—and may continue to change—the lives of families who depend on that support."

This press briefing comes as the Bush administration and Congress debate reauthorization of the 1996 federal welfare law that limits the time welfare recipients can collect assistance and requires them to work. The administration's proposal for TANF reauthorization maintains current funding levels, requires a 40-hour workweek, and redefines what activities count as work.

The briefing will be moderated by E.J. Dionne Jr. and will include presentations by mayors Anthony Williams (Washington, DC) and Karen Anderson (Minnetonka, MN). Ed Garza (San Antonio, TX) and Tom Menino (Boston, MA) will discuss how their cities have fared with changes in welfare legislation and Senator John Breaux (D-LA) will also be a panelist.

(Continued next page)

Waller will reveal survey results—including the most prevalent employment barriers TANF recipients face and reasons the working poor return to welfare roles—and will recommend policy changes based on those results and other research.

“Mayors need more flexibility and support services like child care for working poor families,” Waller says. “More than almost anyone, mayors know what works for families in cities, and what doesn’t. This report gives mayors a chance to share that frontline experience.”

Moderator:

E.J. DIONNE JR.

Senior Fellow, Governance Studies, Brookings;
Columnist, *The Washington Post*

Panelists:

MAYOR ANTHONY WILLIAMS

(Washington, DC)
Second Vice President, National League of
Cities

MAYOR TOM MENINO

(Boston, MA)
President, U.S. Conference of Mayors

MAYOR ED GARZA

(San Antonio, TX)

MAYOR KAREN ANDERSON

(Minnetonka, MN)

U.S. SENATOR JOHN BREAU (D-LA)

MARGY WALLER

Visiting Fellow, Brookings, Center on Urban
and Metropolitan Policy

<p>CONTACT: Ed Hatcher, 301/379-2169 or Colin Johnson, Brookings Chief Media Relations Officer, 202/797-6310</p>
