

## Support HB22-1259

Reps. Duran & Jodeh | Sen. Moreno

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), known here as Colorado Works, provides financial support to families far below the federal poverty level. A parent with two children must make **less than \$421 a month** to qualify for TANF basic cash assistance. Families in extreme poverty were struggling to make ends meet before the pandemic and are likely still the furthest from economic recovery.

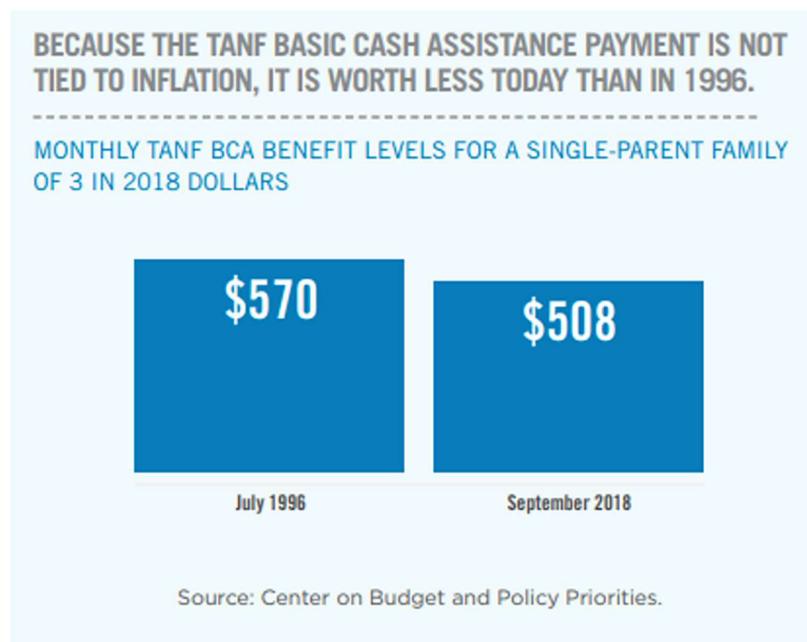
### For a family of three, living in extreme poverty means getting by on only \$10 per person per day

For a family of three to get out of extreme poverty (above 50% of the Federal Poverty Level) they would need to make more than \$10,980 per year. To lift families out of extreme poverty, Colorado should:

- ◆ Increase TANF basic cash assistance and ensure that it keeps up with the rising cost of living
- ◆ Make improvements to how TANF serves families
- ◆ Reduce the “cliff effect” and create a smoother off-ramp to economic security
- ◆ Improve engagement and outreach with families

### Increase cash assistance and ensure that it keeps up with the rising cost of living

- Basic Cash Assistance (BCA) is the most targeted approach Colorado can take to reducing extreme childhood poverty, which has a lifelong impact on child well-being.
- BCA in Colorado is only \$508 a month for a family of three, leaving that family living at about 28% of the poverty level. Twenty-four states have BCA payments higher than Colorado.
- **HB1259 lays out a 5-year phase-in to increase BCA payments for families to the equivalent of 50% of the poverty level**, or \$915 a month for a family of three, and ensure that payments keep up with the rising cost of living in Colorado in future years.



## **Make improvements to how TANF serves families**

- Reduce punitive sanctions to minimize barriers for families seeking economic security
- Improve work requirements to be more responsive to the needs of families in circumstances of hardship
- Ease the drug felony restrictions from participation in the TANF program

## **Reduce the “cliff effect” and allow a smoother off-ramp to economic security**

- Improve income calculations and disregards as parents find employment and move toward economic security
- Improve time limit extensions for participation in TANF to be more responsive to the needs of families
- Align eligibility and redetermination timelines with other programs to ease burdens on families and counties

## **Improve engagement and outreach with families**

- Elevate family voices in the spaces where decisions about TANF policies are made and implemented
- Make investments to improve outreach and communication about TANF to eligible families, including immigrant families
- Require consistent communication with enrolled families about program options and services, including child care, work and education, and other supports

## **Supporters:**

ACCESS Housing of Adams County Inc.  
All Families Deserve a Chance Coalition  
Almost Home, Inc.  
Anne Litwinski-Advocate  
Ayla Bussel-Advocate  
Brace Gibson, J.D.  
Center for Work Education and Employment (CWEE)  
Children’s Hospital Colorado  
Clayton Early Learning  
Colorado Center on Law & Policy  
Colorado Coalition for the Homeless  
Colorado Children’s Campaign  
Colorado Fiscal Institute  
Colorado Latino Leadership Advocacy and Research Organization (CLLARO)  
Colorado Poverty Law Project  
Colorado School Medicaid Consortium  
Colorado Social Legislation Committee (CSLC)  
CommunityWorks Inc.  
Denver’s Early Childhood Council  
Ealasha Vaughner-Advocate  
Early Childhood Council of Larimer County  
The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County  
ECHO & Family Center Early Childhood Council  
Elephant Circle  
Emergency Family Assistance Association  
Florence Crittenton Services  
Focus Points Family Resource Center  
FrontLine Farming  
The Gathering Place

Healthy Child Care Colorado  
Healthy Together  
Heather Hageman-Advocate  
Human Services Network of Colorado  
Hunger Free Colorado  
Illuminate Colorado  
Jennifer Jepsen-Advocate  
Kaylie Weese-Advocate  
Laurie Harvey-Advocate  
Lisa Saenz-Advocate  
Little Giants Learning Center  
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry Colorado  
Maria Droste Counseling Services  
Metro Caring  
National Association of Social Workers, Colorado Chapter  
Parent Possible  
Raise Colorado  
Rocky Mountain Children’s Discovery Center  
Rocky Mountain Partnership  
Rose Community Foundation  
Skills2Compete – Colorado  
Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning  
Ty Johnson-Family Advocate  
WeeCycle  
Westminster Public Schools McKinney Vento  
The Women’s Foundation of Colorado

