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Resolution Number: 160

Financial Implications: None

Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries

1 Revise Resolution 160: Principles of Welfare Reform, as follows:

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3 Revise opening to "A Statement of Shared Principles of Welfare Reform" section as
4 follows:

5 ~~The goal of Welfare Reform must be to lift people out of poverty, not merely to reduce~~
6 ~~welfare rolls. To be effective in reducing poverty, the Work Opportunity and Personal~~
7 ~~Responsibility Act of 1996, commonly known as Temporary Aid to Needy Families~~
8 ~~(TANF), and related welfare laws should be based on the following principles. It must:~~

9 **On February 8, 2006, the President of the United States signed legislation**
10 **authorizing the Work Opportunity and Personal Responsibility Act, commonly**
11 **known as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Act. Originally signed**
12 **into law in 1966, the new provisions will shape the nature of America's welfare**
13 **policies through 2010. Addressing the needs of the most vulnerable of our citizens,**
14 **particularly women and children, should be the aim of any welfare program. The**
15 **TANF Reauthorization heightens the work mandate as a condition to receive**
16 **benefits, without ensuring adequate family supports such as child care or reducing**
17 **medical and/or mental health barriers to employment. The goal of Welfare Reform**
18 **should be to lift people out of poverty.**

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20 **As states now consider the challenge of meeting Federal requirements, we must**
21 **continue to advocate for policies which:**

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24 Amend point four as follows:

25 4. Continue and encourage public/private partnerships to train workers and help them
26 find jobs. If public jobs are created, they should lead to family-sustaining wages, comply
27 with workplace protection laws, and not displace current workers. States should provide
28 means by which employment programs can be evaluated at the local level for
29 effectiveness and fairness **and** allow welfare recipients to retain a substantial portion of
30 wage earnings and assets before losing cash, housing, health, child-care, food assistance
31 or other benefits. In no case should former welfare recipients receive less in combined
32 benefits and income as a result of working than they received while they were on welfare.

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35 Insert new call to action as follows:

36 **Therefore, we call on annual conference boards of church and society or their**
37 **equivalents to urge their state and county governments to create programs that**
38 **assist current and former welfare recipients in making the transition from**
39 **dependence to economic health, including: training, public sector job creation, child**
40 **care and resources for parenting.**

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42 **We urge local churches to familiarize themselves with the issues regarding welfare**
43 **reform. As states develop changes to TANF regulations, we urge local churches to**
44 **work with community organizations, local advocates and state officials to protect**

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45 **the right of all people to dignity and well-being, to improve education and training**
46 **opportunities, and to ensure a “safety net” for the most vulnerable among us.**

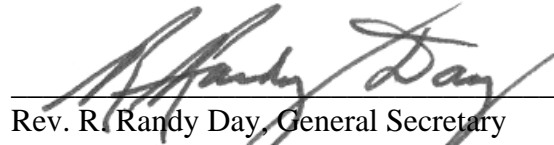
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