

CHAPTER 246

GOVERNMENT - STATE

SENATE BILL 07-235

BY SENATOR(S) Boyd, Bacon, Fitz-Gerald, Groff, Morse, Sandoval, Schwartz, Tochtrop, Tupa, Veiga, and Windels;
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Riesberg, Borodkin, Carroll M., Carroll T., Fischer, Kefalas, Labuda, Levy, and Peniston.

AN ACT**CONCERNING THE CREATION OF AN ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD.**

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Part 1 of article 32 of title 24, Colorado Revised Statutes, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to read:

24-32-115. Economic self-sufficiency - legislative declaration - development of standards - rules - fund. (1) **Legislative declaration.** THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HEREBY FINDS AND DECLARES THAT:

(a) MOST STATE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ARE CALIBRATED TO THE FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL, A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL NATIONAL STANDARD DESIGNED IN THE 1960S THAT IS CALCULATED LARGELY ON THE COST OF FOOD AND HAS ONLY BEEN UPDATED FOR INFLATION;

(b) THE STANDARD IS OUTDATED AND VIRTUALLY IRRELEVANT TO THE ACTUAL COSTS FAMILIES FACE TODAY, SUCH AS CHILD CARE, HEALTH CARE, AND TRANSPORTATION;

(c) A SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD MEASURES HOW MUCH INCOME IS NEEDED FOR A FAMILY OF A GIVEN COMPOSITION IN A GIVEN PLACE TO ADEQUATELY MEET ITS BASIC NEEDS WITHOUT PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ASSISTANCE;

(d) A SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD PROVIDES A MORE ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF COLORADO FAMILIES;

(e) A SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD IS AN EXCELLENT TOOL THAT COULD BE USED

Capital letters indicate new material added to existing statutes; dashes through words indicate deletions from existing statutes and such material not part of act.

IN MANY WAYS, INCLUDING:

(I) CREATING A BENCHMARK FOR MEASURING THE EFFECTS OF PROGRAMS AND POLICIES;

(II) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;

(III) TARGETING HIGHER-WAGE JOBS FOR COLORADANS;

(IV) ENHANCING EDUCATION, JOB TRAINING, AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS; AND

(V) COUNSELING CLIENTS TRANSITIONING FROM WELFARE TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

(2) (a) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2008, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS SHALL MAKE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS A STANDARD TO MEASURE THE SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF COLORADO FAMILIES. THE STANDARD SHALL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT REGIONAL AND COUNTY VARIATIONS IN THE COSTS OF HOUSING, CHILD CARE, HEALTH CARE, FOOD, AND TRANSPORTATION AND MISCELLANEOUS COSTS, AND THE EFFECT OF EXISTING TAX LAWS, INCLUDING STATE SALES TAX, PAYROLL TAXES, FEDERAL AND STATE INCOME TAX, CHILD CARE TAX CREDITS, AND THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT.

(b) THE STANDARD REQUIRED PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH (a) OF THIS SUBSECTION (2) SHALL:

(I) RELY TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, ON DATA REPORTED BY THE UNITED STATES CENSUS BUREAU, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND ON OTHER DATA REPORTED TO STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES USING STANDARDIZED METHODOLOGY;

(II) DETERMINE HOUSING COSTS USING FAIR MARKET RENTS FOR APARTMENTS AS REPORTED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT;

(III) DETERMINE CHILD CARE COSTS USING AVERAGE COSTS FOR LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO FAMILY DAY CARE, AS REPORTED TO THE STATE'S CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCIES FOR CHILDREN OF DIFFERENT AGES IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE STATE;

(IV) DETERMINE FOOD COSTS USING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE LOW-COST FOOD PLAN; AND

(V) IN HEALTH CARE COSTS, INCLUDE INSURANCE PREMIUM COSTS AND OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES BASED UPON THE MEDICAL EXPENDITURE PANEL SURVEY AND ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION USING THE MEDICAL CONSUMER PRICE INDEX.

(3) THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL AFFAIRS IS AUTHORIZED TO SEEK AND ACCEPT GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS FROM PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCES FOR THE

PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION. ALL PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FUNDS RECEIVED THROUGH GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS SHALL BE TRANSMITTED TO THE STATE TREASURER, WHO SHALL CREDIT THE SAME TO THE SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FUND, WHICH FUND IS HEREBY CREATED AND REFERRED TO IN THIS SECTION AS THE "FUND". THE MONEYS IN THE FUND SHALL BE CONTINUOUSLY APPROPRIATED FOR THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION. ANY MONEYS IN THE FUND NOT EXPENDED FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION MAY BE INVESTED BY THE STATE TREASURER AS PROVIDED BY LAW. ALL INTEREST AND INCOME DERIVED FROM THE INVESTMENT AND DEPOSIT OF MONEYS IN THE FUND SHALL BE CREDITED TO THE FUND. ANY UNEXPENDED AND UNENCUMBERED MONEYS REMAINING IN THE FUND AT THE END OF A FISCAL YEAR SHALL REMAIN IN THE FUND AND SHALL NOT BE CREDITED OR TRANSFERRED TO THE GENERAL FUND OR ANOTHER FUND.

SECTION 2. Effective date. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2007.

SECTION 3. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: May 17, 2007