

Legal Momentum Supports the RISE Act

December 6, 2011

Legal Momentum strongly supports the Rewriting to Improve and Secure an Exit Out of Poverty Act (RISE) to reauthorize and reform the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) (<http://www.legalmomentum.org/our-work/women-and-poverty/tanf-reauthorization.html>) program. The bill was recently introduced by Representative Gwen Moore (D-WI), a former recipient of welfare assistance. In developing RISE, Congresswoman Moore consulted with Legal Momentum and other advocacy organizations.

In 1996 the federal government enacted sweeping welfare reform legislation eliminating "welfare as we know it" by replacing Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) with TANF as the national family public assistance program. TANF is especially important to poor women and their families. In fact, over 90 percent of its adult benefit recipients are women. But TANF falls far short of what an adequate safety net program should be. Benefits are far below the official poverty standard. Only a minority of eligible families actually receive benefits.

The RISE Act would change that. Among other improvements, RISE would provide permanent funding for TANF, reform work requirements to provide education and training as a path out of poverty, guarantee child care for TANF work-eligible recipients, and more.

"The RISE Act would give TANF recipients a true stepping stone to economic security," said Legal Momentum President Elizabeth Grayer. "Legal Momentum is proud to support Congresswoman Moore's effort to create a meaningful safety net."

Read Legal Momentum's letter in support of the RISE Act (<http://www.legalmomentum.org/our-work/women-and-poverty/resources--publications/letter-support-rise.pdf>).

Learn more about the RISE Act from the Congressional Research Service:

- **a summary** (<http://www.legalmomentum.org/our-work/women-and-poverty/resources--publications/rise-summary.pdf>) **of RISE,**
- **a comparison** (<http://www.legalmomentum.org/our-work/women-and-poverty/resources--publications/comparing-rise-and-tanf.pdf>) **of RISE and TANF, and**
- **estimates** (<http://www.legalmomentum.org/our-work/women-and-poverty/resources--publications/tanf-block-rise.pdf>) **of RISE's impact on states' TANF block grant amounts.**

(Note that RISE is not yet available on THOMAS (<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php>), the Library of Congress website. A link to the bill will be added as soon as it is available.)

Learn more about Congresswoman Moore's support of the RISE Act (http://gwenmoore.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=706&Itemid=31)