



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

Department of
Workforce Services

JON S. PIERPONT
Executive Director

CASEY R. CAMERON
Deputy Director

GREG PARAS
Deputy Director

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Education and the Workforce
*Strengthening Access and Accountability to Work in
Welfare Programs*

Strengthening Access and Accountability to Work in Welfare Programs
*United States House of Representatives Committee on
Education and the Workforce
March 15, 2018 10:00 a.m.
Oral Testimony of Liz Carver
Workforce Development Program Division Director
with the Utah Department of Workforce Services*

Good morning, thank you Chairman Guthrie, ranking member Davis, and members of the subcommittee. I am honored to be here representing the state of Utah, our Governor and Executive Director. It's fitting that our state was asked to provide input on our work-first approach. After all, Utah's nickname is *The Beehive State*. The beehive stands as a symbol of hard work and industry.

More than 20 years ago, Governor Michael Leavitt and Lt. Governor Olene Walker organized a taskforce to evaluate Utah's workforce and welfare models. We had more than 29 programs spread out between 5 state agencies. Quoting Governor Leavitt, he said, "It just cried out for a better solution." The taskforce ultimately created one department comprised of workforce and welfare programs with the intent to provide better services to Utah citizens. Today, the Department manages the following:

- Workforce development
- Unemployment insurance
- Welfare
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Child Care
- Veterans employment
- Refugee services
- Housing and community development
- And labor market information

We believe this model works well in good times and bad. We've been fortunate to experience 48 consecutive months of less than 4 percent unemployment. We know this model assists Utahns in getting their first job, finding a better job, and obtaining a fulfilling career.



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

Department of
Workforce Services

JON S. PIERPONT
Executive Director

CASEY R. CAMERON
Deputy Director

GREG PARAS
Deputy Director

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Education and the Workforce
*Strengthening Access and Accountability to Work in
Welfare Programs*

Each of these programs benefit from operating under a unified single state agency with:

- One leadership structure
- Streamlined service delivery
- Braided funding sources
- Integrated technology solutions
- And, a single established brand

When the decision was made to bring all the workforce and welfare programs together, the state made a few important commitments.

First, the commitment to exceptional customer service. By bringing these programs together, we created a one-stop system with one website and a common entrance to receive services that would otherwise send citizens to multiple locations.

Second, the commitment to technology. Utah has a strong online platform to ensure customers can access services through multiple options at their convenience.

Third, the commitment to being family focused. This includes Utah's "intergenerational poverty" initiative to fully understand the cycles of poverty from one generation to another.

To further illustrate how an integrated model allows Utah to be "work-first" driven, let me share an example.

We have been able to leverage our workforce expertise with TANF recipients to engage in pilot programs resulting in soft skill development, credential attainment and employment. We started with a program for single mothers in poverty and plan to build upon our success with an upcoming project to assist absent fathers in obtaining employment and re-engaging with their children.

Let me end by addressing work requirements and activities taking place in Utah. Because "work first" is a priority and our programs are aligned, this principle is no longer something we just believe in, it is a standard practice.

When someone needs to apply for SNAP or Medicaid they do it through an online portal on JOBS.utah.gov where job-seeking services are readily available.

jobs.utah.gov



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

Department of
Workforce Services

JON S. PIERPONT
Executive Director

CASEY R. CAMERON
Deputy Director

GREG PARAS
Deputy Director

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Education and the Workforce
*Strengthening Access and Accountability to Work in
Welfare Programs*

When someone needs face-to-face service for public assistance or are likely to exhaust unemployment insurance, they come to one location, an American Job Center, where employers are on site recruiting for available jobs.

When a TANF customer needs childcare support to obtain and maintain employment, we are able to quickly assist in removing barriers because our programs work together.

I would like to leave you with some recommendations to consider:

1. First, we recommend outcome-based measures instead of focusing on activity in programs. For example, measuring skills gained, credentials attained and employment secured.
2. Second, continue to push integration of programs at the federal level. Even though we integrated 20 plus years ago, it took years of research, coordination and a governor leading the charge to make the change. If it is siloed at the federal level, it will likely remain siloed at the state level.
3. Third, allow individuals to access education that leads to a recognized credential as an option under work requirements.
4. Fourth, align work requirements across programs and give states the flexibility to implement.

Finally, we regularly host other states interested in our model who ask questions about “where to begin” or “how to replicate.” Through our labor of love over the past 20 plus years, the feedback we offer is that “it’s not one single thing.” Merely having a single leadership structure or program co-location will not necessarily duplicate our results. We have observed the need for a total package of leadership, culture, technology, braided funding and a commitment to serving fellow citizens.

Thank you.