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HOUSE BILL 635

**49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**

INTRODUCED BY

Andy Nuñez

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC ASSISTANCE; REQUIRING THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO DEVOTE A PORTION OF FEDERAL FUNDING TO FAMILY FORMATION AND RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD PROGRAMS; AMENDING AND ENACTING SECTIONS OF THE NMSA 1978.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. Section 27-2B-1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1998, Chapter 8, Section 1 and Laws 1998, Chapter 9, Section 1) is amended to read:

"27-2B-1. SHORT TITLE.--~~[Sections 1 through 20 of this act]~~ Chapter 27, Article 2B NMSA 1978 may be cited as the "New Mexico Works Act"."

Section 2. A new section of the New Mexico Works Act is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] FAMILY FORMATION AND RESPONSIBLE

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1 FATHERHOOD PROGRAMS.--

2 A. In fiscal year 2010 and each subsequent fiscal  
3 year, a sum of at least two percent of the federal block grant  
4 for the state's temporary assistance for needy families  
5 programs, which programs provide for a portion to be spent on  
6 family formation and responsible fatherhood, shall be spent on  
7 programs to enhance family formation and responsible  
8 fatherhood.

9 B. Family formation programs include:

10 (1) education in high schools on the value of  
11 marriage, relationship skills and budgeting;

12 (2) marriage education, marriage skills and  
13 relationship skills programs that may include parenting skills,  
14 financial management, conflict resolution and job and career  
15 advancement for non-married pregnant women and non-married  
16 expectant fathers;

17 (3) premarital education, marriage skills  
18 training and relationship skills for engaged couples and  
19 couples or individuals interested in marriage;

20 (4) marriage enhancement and marriage skills  
21 training programs for married couples;

22 (5) divorce reduction programs that teach  
23 relationship skills; and

24 (6) marriage mentoring programs that use  
25 married couples as role models and mentors in at-risk

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1 communities.

2 C. Responsible fatherhood programs include:

3 (1) activities to promote or sustain marriage,  
4 such as:

5 (a) disseminating information about the  
6 benefits of marriage and two-parent involvement for children;

7 (b) enhancing relationship skills;

8 (c) education regarding how to control  
9 aggressive behavior;

10 (d) disseminating information on  
11 domestic violence and child abuse;

12 (e) marriage preparation programs;

13 (f) premarital counseling;

14 (g) skills-based marriage education; and

15 (h) family financial planning seminars;

16 (2) activities to promote responsible  
17 parenting through activities such as skills-based parenting  
18 education; and

19 (3) activities to foster economic stability by  
20 helping fathers improve their economic status through work  
21 first services, job search, job training, subsidized  
22 employment, job retention and job enhancement.

23 D. The federal funds for family formation and  
24 responsible fatherhood programs shall be administered by the  
25 department and shall be awarded through a competitive request

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1 for proposals process.

2 E. All programs shall offer at least eight hours of  
3 education or training to individuals or couples using  
4 evidence-based curricula and shall develop a domestic violence  
5 protocol in conjunction with a local domestic violence program.

6 F. The secretary may promulgate rules for family  
7 formation and responsible fatherhood training programs.

8 G. All programs shall be voluntary and shall serve  
9 all interested persons regardless of age, gender, ethnicity,  
10 religion, marital status, sexual orientation or disability  
11 status.

12 H. The secretary shall report annually through 2012  
13 to the interim welfare reform oversight committee on family  
14 formation and responsible fatherhood programs and funding."

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