



News Release

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Contact: Tam St. Claire, President
215-794-5475
twstclaire@bcwac.org

Long Anticipated "Cliff-Effect" Study Released

The Bucks County Women's Advocacy Coalition (BCWAC) is pleased that the Study approved by Senate Resolution 62 directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study state programs targeted to help working families achieve economic self-sufficiency has been released. The study outlines strategic recommendations to reduce the number of families living in poverty by addressing the impacts of the "cliff effect."

Under current law, minor increases in income can push working families slightly above income requirements for state support programs that make it possible for parents to work, such as child care and nutritional assistance. Known as the "cliff effect," this phenomenon often creates disincentives for poor families to earn more money.

The study suggests several recommendations to mitigate the cliff effect and provide a more reasonable path to ease the transition from poverty to self-reliance. "I am delighted that the report presents recommendations for legislation upon which both the PA Senate and House can collaborate to ameliorate poverty in Pennsylvania by addressing needed adjustments in the administration of public support programs," according to Tam St. Claire, President of the BCWAC.

"This report is a tremendous first step toward addressing some of the biggest challenges facing women and families on the path to economic self-sufficiency," Senator Chuck McIlhinney said. "The Bucks County Women's Advocacy Coalition has been an incredible partner in bringing these issues to light, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Coalition, my colleagues in the General Assembly and other advocacy groups to create systemic changes to benefit Pennsylvania families."

The BCWAC commends Senator McIlhenny and Senator Bob Mensch, Chair of the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee that oversaw the study and its dedicated staff especially Dr. MaryAnn Nardone, Project Manager, and Philip Durgin, Executive Director. "We look forward to working with all our Bucks County legislators, the Making Work Pay Coalition, and other involved parties to construct and enact legislation that will eliminate the cliff effect and help Pennsylvania's working families," said St. Claire.

The Bucks County Women's Advocacy Coalition is a nonpartisan coalition of 38 organizational Partners and over 150 individual Partners that serve women and girls. We speak with one voice to empower, educate, and advocate to promote gender equality and economic self-sufficiency for all.

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