

1 State of Arkansas
2 80th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 1995

H.R. 1020

4 By: Representatives Goodwin and Flanagin
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7 HOUSE RESOLUTION

8 TO REQUEST THE ARKANSAS CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO REJECT
9 A BLOCK GRANT AS LISTED IN HR 4, THE PERSONAL
10 RESPONSIBILITY ACT.
11

12 Subtitle

13 TO REQUEST THE ARKANSAS CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO REJECT
14 A BLOCK GRANT AS LISTED IN HR 4, THE PERSONAL
15 RESPONSIBILITY ACT.
16

17 WHEREAS, the National School Lunch Act was enacted in 1946 "as a
18 measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the
19 Nation_s children," following a half century of less than adequate local and
20 state incentives to feed children at school; and

21 WHEREAS, the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 was enacted "in recognition of
22 the demonstrated relationship between food and good nutrition in the capacity
23 of children to develop and learn"; and

24 WHEREAS, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants
25 and Children (WIC) began in 1974 to provide nutrition education, specified
26 food vouchers, and access to health care services; and

27 WHEREAS, the Older Americans Act was established in 1972 to meet the
28 unique nutritional needs of senior citizens by providing meals, fostering
29 social interaction, facilitating the delivery of supportive services, and
30 offering nutrition education; and

31 WHEREAS, the Personal Responsibility Act would combine food assistance
32 and nutrition programs and reduce funding in Arkansas by \$19 million, and
33 force advocates for the elderly, the handicapped, and children to compete for
34 limited discretionary funds; and

35 WHEREAS, the Child Nutrition Programs would be hit with a 26% reduction

1 in funds, including all funds for the basic infrastructure of the programs
2 that provide support to local school districts; and

3 WHEREAS, 262,000 Arkansas students would become ineligible for the
4 school lunch programs; and

5 WHEREAS, over 20,000 Arkansas women, infants and children currently
6 income-eligible for WIC would become ineligible; and

7 WHEREAS, the Personal Responsibility Act would jeopardize the
8 continuation of the School Lunch Program in over 40,000 schools according to
9 a Library of Congress Study; and

10 WHEREAS, the Personal Responsibility Act would severely restrict how
11 the funds could be used at the local level to accomplish the goal of feeding
12 children; and

13 WHEREAS, students who eat the school breakfast have been found to have
14 higher test scores and lower rates of absenteeism and tardiness; and

15 WHEREAS, hungry children cannot learn and illiterate adults cannot
16 compete in a world economy; and

17 WHEREAS, a child that is ill-fed is dulled to curiosity, lowered in
18 stamina, and distracted from learning; and

19 WHEREAS, more than 50 million school lunches were served last year in
20 all Arkansas public schools and many private schools and more than 17 million
21 breakfasts were served in all but 20 Arkansas public schools and many private
22 schools; and

23 WHEREAS, federal funding for the school lunch and school breakfast
24 programs go to schools only after meals have been served to children; and

25 WHEREAS, each month in Arkansas the WIC Program serves approximately
26 21,000 pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, 22,200 infants, and
27 42,000 children; and

28 WHEREAS, women receiving Medicaid and WIC services while pregnant had
29 substantially lower rates of low and very low birth weight babies than women
30 who received Medicaid, but no prenatal WIC; and

31 WHEREAS, research studies have found that every dollar spent on
32 pregnant women in WIC produces \$1.92 to \$4.21 in Medicaid savings for
33 newborns and their mothers; and

34 WHEREAS, the WIC Program has had a major impact on reducing anemia
35 among children from 22% in 1982 to 14% in 1994 in Arkansas; and

1 WHEREAS, 4 and 5 year olds who participated in WIC in early childhood
2 have better vocabularies and digit memory scores than comparable children who
3 did not participate in WIC; and

4 WHEREAS, the Personal Responsibility Act would trade nutrition science
5 based risk assessment criteria for dollar based programming in WIC; and

6 WHEREAS, the Area Agencies on Aging provide 4,102,400 meals each year
7 to Arkansans at or over age 60; and

8 WHEREAS, the Older American Act Congregate and Home-delivered Nutrition
9 Services are a fundamental part of a comprehensive service system aimed at
10 keeping older people at home, supporting family caregivers, and avoiding
11 unnecessary and costly institutionalization; and

12 WHEREAS, these Senior Nutrition Programs provide meals to one person
13 for one year for the same cost as one day in a hospital or three years for
14 the cost of one month in a nursing home; and

15 WHEREAS, the block grant would increase the administrative burden for
16 the state at the same time reducing the available administrative dollars; and

17 WHEREAS, the idea of block granting all funds which involve food may
18 appeal on a "concept" level, on the "real" level it would decrease local
19 decision making, options and partnerships, and pit groups within the
20 community against each other for funding; and

21 WHEREAS, the Personal Responsibility Act, in addition to forcing people
22 off of the food assistance programs, would potentially harm the food and
23 agriculture economy by a significant decline in retail food sales, food
24 manufacturing and distribution, and gross farm income; and

25 WHEREAS, the aforementioned food assistance and nutrition programs are
26 not welfare programs;

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28 NOW THEREFORE,

29 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EIGHTIETH GENERAL
30 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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32 THAT the House of Representatives requests that the Arkansas
33 Congressional delegation to the Senate and House of Representatives of the
34 United States reject a block grant as listed in HR4 the Personal
35 Responsibility Act, of the School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, the Special

1 Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the
2 Older Americans Act, the Commodity Distribution Program, and other food
3 assistance programs, continuing their long support of these essential federal
4 programs.

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