



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CHARITABLE CHOICE CONNECTIONS

Final Report

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This report describes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Administration for Family, Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network meeting, *Strengthening Communities Through Charitable Choice Connections*. The workshop, jointly sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families, the Office of Community Services, and the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network, was held in Atlanta, GA on April 9, 2002.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CHARITABLE CHOICE CONNECTIONS

The Welfare Peer Technical Assistance (TA) Network is a federally funded initiative through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Family Assistance. The objective of the Welfare Peer TA Network is to facilitate the sharing of information between and among States and to establish linkages between organizations serving the needs of welfare recipients.

Jointly sponsored by ACF and the Office of Community Services (OCS), with support from the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network, *Strengthening Communities Through Charitable Choice Connections* was held April 9, 2002 in Atlanta, GA. Participants included representatives from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agencies, Departments of Labor, and their faith- and community-based partners from across ACF Region IV (KY, TN, NC, SC, MS, AL, GA, FL). The purpose of the meeting was to educate participants about the Charitable Choice provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), and to explore promising practices for partnering with faith-based service providers.

I. BACKGROUND

I. BACKGROUND

The Charitable Choice provision opens the doors for new partnerships between States and faith-based organizations (FBOs) to serve those in need through a variety of funding streams. This section will provide an overview of the provision, and information regarding implementation of the legislation by Federal and State agencies. Understanding the specifics and the historical context of Charitable Choice is critical to understanding its implications. To that end, this background section highlights the important aspects of the legislative climate surrounding Charitable Choice and identifies some key features of the provision.

On August 26, 1996, President Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), creating Public Law 104-193. The provisions of this welfare reform package reflect the growing consensus that States and localities are the proper loci of control for many social programs. As such, the Act devolves the operational authority for welfare programs to States while maintaining policy authority at the Federal level.

One example of this type of devolution is the replacement of Aid to Family with Dependent Children (AFDC) with Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF). The TANF program's block grant system is a means of encouraging States to develop the service menus and run the welfare programs most effective for their specific clientele. The TANF Block Grant allows States to provide temporary cash assistance to needy families. States have great flexibility in designing their welfare programs provided they are "reasonably calculated to accomplish the purposes of TANF." State plans must have clear "objective" criteria that are both "fair" and "equitable" in determining eligibility and benefit levels, and must clearly explain client appeal rights.

Cooperation with nonprofit organizations is much more consistent with the objectives of TANF than AFDC, and the reform legislation encourages such partnerships. Specific legislative encouragement is given to the development of partnerships with nonprofit and faith-based organizations. The provisions of this cooperation are described as "Charitable Choice."

Section 104 of P.L. 104-93, *Services Provided by Charitable, Religious, or Private Organizations*, is commonly known as the provision establishing "Charitable Choice." §104 applies when governments choose to contract with non-governmental organizations for the provision of social services. §104 prohibits any State using Federal monies to purchase services

for clients of such programs as TANF, Medicaid, SSI, and Food Stamps¹ from discriminating against religious or faith-based organizations (FBOs), or other community-based organizations (CBOs), in the contract competition, or procurement, process.

Specifically, the legislation requires that FBOs be allowed to compete for contracts with the State “on the same basis as any other nongovernmental provider without impairing the religious character of such organizations, and without diminishing the religious freedom of beneficiaries of assistance funded under such program” (§104a2a). That is, if a State chooses to contract with nonprofit organizations for the provision of social services funded in any proportion by Federal monies, faith- and community-based organizations must be fully considered as equal competitors for such procurement contracts.

Section 104 addresses the competition for *Federal* welfare dollars. It has no authority to instruct States on the usage of *State* expenditures for welfare programs. Specifically, while faith-based organizations may not be excluded from consideration for involvement in contract or voucher-based service provision paid for by Federal dollars, no such protection exists for the expenditure of State dollars. In fact, so-called “Blaine Amendments” existing in the Constitutions of several States, prohibit the distribution of State funds to any faith-based organization. However, even these types of provisions do not outweigh the Charitable Choice provisions’ applicability to Federal dollars disbursed through State agencies. If it so desires, the State retains the capacity to separate State from Federal welfare dollars, thereby exempting State dollars from the Federal statute, but if State and Federal funds are blended, the Federal requirements apply to the mixed funds

Section 104 establishes two types of fiscal relationships between States and nonprofit service providers. States may either (1) “contract with organizations,” or (2) establish “certificates, vouchers, or other forms of disbursement.” In the first instance, States pay providers to deliver specific services. In the second case, the State furnishes a client with a voucher that is redeemable for services from any eligible provider.

When contracting with nonprofit providers, or using vouchers redeemable thereto, the State must endeavor to protect the rights of both service providers and recipients. FBOs contracting with States are prohibited by *subsection j* from using any Federal funds in “worship, instruction, or proselytization.” Therefore, a faith-based organization may not require

¹ Charitable Choice applicability to Medicaid, SSI, and Food Stamps is limited to the extent to which these programs can be effectively managed by the States contract vehicles or voucher systems with nonprofit organizations.

participation in a religious service by a service recipient, nor use Federal dollars to promote its particular religious position in any way. In a voucher system, however, no such protection is needed, as Federal funds do not flow to the FBO directly.

Likewise, the beneficiaries' right to choose must be protected. This right to choose is a fundamental part of the voucher system. However, in a service contract system no such protection exists. Therefore, §104(e) requires that any eligible individual who objects to receiving services from an FBO must be provided with another secular option for service delivery (often referred to as the "alternative service" provision).² The legislation requires that this alternative service be of at least equal value to that available from the faith-based organization. Further, this alternative service must be accessible to the beneficiary and available in a timely fashion.

Specific provisions also exist to protect the organizational integrity of faith-based organizations contracting with governments. Regardless of which type of funding stream is utilized, the faith-based organization "shall retain its independence from Federal, State, and local governments, including such organization's control over the definition, development, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs" {§104 (d)(1)}. Providers cannot be required to remove religious symbols or artifacts, and may continue to use a faith-based approach lauding values and character in the provision of counseling services.

Additionally, providers also retain their protections under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Title VII exempts faith-based organizations from anti-discrimination law, which requires that religion not be considered a factor when making hiring decisions.³ Other Federal anti-discrimination laws, such as Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 still apply to faith-based organizations partnering with governmental entities.

The purpose of Section 104 of PRWORA is to eliminate the barriers to successful participation of faith-based organizations in the delivery of social services. However, this legislation is only part of a greater commitment to increase the efficacy of service delivery by all

² If a State chooses to contract with only faith-based organizations, that State must be prepared to deliver services to an eligible individual so objecting. In other words, if a TANF client prefers to receive services from a secular provider instead of a faith institution, then the State must make that option available.

³ For more information, see the *Charitable Choice Implementation Guide* produced by the Center for Public Justice.

types of community-based and nonprofit organizations. The specific reference to the faith-based organizations is necessary to eliminate any confusion regarding the somewhat nebulous issue of church/State separation. The commitment to both faith-based and secular CBOs is clear in the language of the Executive Orders of President Bush.

II. WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

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As States endeavor to respond to the Charitable Choice provisions of PROWRA, obstacles and challenges to successful implementation arise. Workshops like the one described in this report are one strategy for overcoming these challenges.

Senior staff from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administration for Children and Families opened the workshop, placing partnerships with the faith-based community in the appropriate regional and National scope.

1. WELCOMING REMARKS

Costas Miskis, Secretary's Regional Representative, Region IV, US Department of Health and Human Services

To begin the workshop, Mr. Costas Miskis laid out four main objectives in partnering with the faith-based community for the provision of social services. These objectives are:

A level playing field ensures that all potential providers stand on even footing in the procurement process—that there is neither favoritism toward, nor discrimination against, faith-based providers.

Respect for allies protects the integrity and mission of faith-based partners involved in the delivery of social services.

Protections for clients ensure that the rights and freedoms (including the right to choose a secular provider) of those seeking services are respected and upheld.

Maintenance of a separation between church and State describes the need to separate the provision of social services from the sectarian activities of faith-based providers and to ensure that public monies support only those expenditures authorized in the contract agreement.

These objectives underpin all efforts to establish effective, efficient partnerships with the faith-based community. Mr. Miskis commended this meeting as a means for communicating and operationalizing these objectives.

2. DISCUSSION OF ACF PRIORITIES

*Carlis V. Williams, Southeast Hub Director, Administration for Children and Families,
US Department of Health and Human Services*

Ms. Williams commended participants for their commitment to and enthusiasm for establishing effective partnerships between State human services agencies and faith- and community-based service providers. She went on to outline the eight key priorities of the Administration for Children and Families:

One Department—Adopting and implementing internal business management practices that will improve systems coordination (e.g., unified systems, improved management of physical and financial assets, etc.).

Prevention—Designing services and outreach and dedicating resources to the prevention of the need for intervention services.

Rural Initiative—Strengthening rural families and developing the capacity of rural communities.

Enhancing Early Literacy of Children—Focusing on parents as the first teachers, this initiative strengthens the pre-reading and numeracy skills of young children, thereby improving school readiness.

Next Phase of Welfare Reform—Expanding welfare reform efforts to meet all four goals of TANF; identifying gaps and changes required to move the welfare reform agenda forward.

Positive Youth Development—Promoting ongoing relationships with adult role models, safe places with structured activities, healthy lifestyle choices, opportunities to acquire marketable skills, and opportunities for community service and civic participation.

Fatherhood/Healthy Marriage—Helping men become responsible, committed, involved fathers; helping couples who choose marriage for themselves to develop the skills and knowledge to form and sustain healthy marriages.

Faith-Based/Community Initiatives—Removing barriers to the full participation of faith-based and other providers in the delivery of social services.

By working toward these priorities in an atmosphere of inclusion and empowerment, ACF anticipates collective outcomes of economically and socially productive lives for families,

opportunities for children to develop into healthy adults, and prosperous and supportive communities for all families.

3. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Sandi Goines, Southeast Hub Special Initiatives Unit

Ms. Goines, a member of the Special Initiatives Unit in the ACF Southeastern Hub, spoke about several grant opportunities available to faith-based organizations who either have 501 (c)(3) status or partner with an organization having that status. This strategy of partnering and pooling resources will allow more faith- and community-based groups to participate in the delivery of Federally-funded social services. Specific funding opportunities, including the *Community Food and Nutrition Program* (DHHS/ACF/OCS), the *Urban and Rural Community Economic Development* (DHHS/ACF/OCS), and the Job Opportunity for Low-Income Individuals (JOLI) program (DHHS/ACF/OCS/Division of Community Discretionary Programs) were highlighted.

Ms. Goines encouraged applicants to focus on the ultimate outcome desired from a particular grant award. Different funding sources, for example, might make computers available, but the most appropriate, and therefore likely, source is one which funds the purchase of computers in response to a mission/objective similar to that of the applicant. Ms. Goines suggested using an internal audit mechanism consisting of four questions to gauge the fundability of a particular project:

- What, specifically, is the organization/applicant trying to accomplish?
- What is the time frame (short, medium, long term) of the envisioned project?
- Who should the partners be?
- Who has the money? Is someone else already doing this work? Can we work with them?

These questions will help grant applicants design programs likely to be funded by administering agencies.

III. THE NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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This section of the conference focused on some of the national initiatives underway to encourage partnerships between human service agencies and community- and faith-based service providers.

1. THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES CENTER FOR FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Elizabeth Seale-Scott, Director, US DHHS Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

After briefly recounting the history of Charitable Choice under then-Governor Bush in the State of Texas, Ms. Seale-Scott focused on the Administration's position that procurement practices should not be based on "who you are" but on "what you can do." Aware of the long-term associations between human services agencies and community- and faith-based providers, Ms. Seale-Scott assured the participants that the objective of her office and of the larger faith-based initiative is not to diminish those historical relationships, but to build upon them.

Ms. Seale-Scott also focused on the need for program inventories and collaboration as remedy for service fragmentation. She noted the need for capacity building in much of the faith- and community-based provider community and encourage representatives from this community in attendance to seek out intermediary organizations or strategic partners with skill-sets complementary to their own.

2. NATIONAL OVERVIEW OF CHARITABLE CHOICE PROGRAMS: FINDING COMMON GROUND

Vernadette Ramirez Broyles, Esq., Director of Public Policy/Legal Counsel, We Care America

As the Director of Public Policy and Legal Counsel for We Care America (WCA), "a national network of faith leaders, denominations, and care providers dedicated to unifying, informing, and enabling the faith community to better serve the needs of the underprivileged around the country," Ms. Broyles is an expert in the Charitable Choice provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) and its subsequent applicability to other Federal programs.

On January 29, 2001, President George W. Bush signed two Executive Orders (EO) dealing with the Charitable Choice provision of P.L. 104-98. The Executive Orders are titled: Establishment of White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and Agency Responsibilities with Respect to Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

2.1 Establishment of White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

With a Stated purpose of helping “the Federal Government coordinate a national effort to expand opportunities for faith-based and other community organizations and to strengthen their capacity to better meet social needs in America’s communities” this first EO exalts the importance of a “level playing field” for religious community groups, the need for “compassionate results,” and the “bedrock principles of pluralism, nondiscrimination, evenhandedness, and neutrality.” To meet these needs, President Bush’s order establishes the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (White House OFBCI). This office will have primary responsibility to “enlist, equip, enable, empower, and expand the work” of community- and faith-based organizations.

In order to accomplish this mission, the White House OFBCI is empowered to employ “executive action, legislation, Federal and private funding and regulatory relief.” Headed by the Assistant to the President for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the White House OFBCI is to have “such staff and other assistance, to the extent permitted by law, as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of [the] order.” These provisions include:

- (a) To encourage private charitable giving to support faith-based and community initiatives;
- (b) To bring concerns, ideas, and policy options to the President for assisting, strengthening, and replicating successful faith-based and other community programs;
- (c) To provide policy and legal education to State, local, and community policymakers and public officials seeking ways to empower faith-based and other community organizations and to improve the opportunities, capacity, and expertise of such groups;
- (d) To develop and implement strategic initiatives under the President’s agenda to strengthen the institutions of civil society and America’s families and communities;
- (e) To showcase and herald innovative grassroots nonprofit organizations and civic initiatives;

- (f) To eliminate unnecessary legislative, regulatory, and other bureaucratic barriers that impede effective faith-based and other community efforts to solve social problems.
- (g) To monitor the implementation of the President's agenda affecting faith-based and other community organizations; and
- (h) To ensure the efforts of faith-based and other community organizations meet high standards of excellence and accountability.

Since the initial authorization of Charitable Choice, Congress has expanded the list of programs to which the provisions apply. Today, in addition to TANF, Welfare to Work (WtW, 1997), Community Services Block Grants (CSBG, 1998), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Act (SAMHSA) Block Grant Drug Treatment Funds (2000) are all included under the auspices of Charitable Choice.

2.2 Agency Responsibilities with Respect to Faith-Based and Community Initiatives⁴

By Executive Order, each of the following Cabinet agencies was called to establish their own Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, similar to the White House OFBCI:

- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Department of Labor
- Department of Justice
- Department of Education.

The agency OFBCIs will coordinate efforts in their agencies to remove regulatory, contracting and other obstacles, and to "...create hospitable environment[s] for groups that have not traditionally collaborated with government..." The Centers are charged with opening their respective organizations to partnerships with faith-based and community-based organizations, and with highlighting programs that are innovative in establishing partnerships between States and FBOs.

⁴ The White House. January 2001. *Rallying the Armies of Compassion*. Available at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/reports/faithbased.html>. Accessed: June 20, 2001.

Three agencies also have additional responsibilities. The Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Labor will review departmental policies and practices concerning compliance with Charitable Choice and funding efforts, and will promote compliance by State and local governments. The Department of Education will review social programs, such as after-school programs and will link public schools with community partners such as faith-based organizations.

All of the Centers will work with, and under the direction of, the new White House OFBCI to support grassroots and faith-based organizations by identifying barriers to participation of faith-based and community organizations in providing services, recommendations to overcome barriers, developing performance indicators and measurable objectives for the reform of Departments' practices and policies.

In August 2001, the White House issued *Unlevel Playing Field* a report detailing the findings of the internal audits required by the Executive Order. Ms. Broyles highlighted five findings contained in the report:

A funding gap exists between the government and grassroots organizations.

A widespread bias against faith- and community-based groups still exists in the Federal government.

Unnecessary bureaucratic and regulatory obstacles prevent full the participation of faith- and community-based organizations in the provision of Federally funded social services.

Federal administrators have not done enough to operationalize Charitable Choice, including failure to require compliance by State and local governments.

Even despite these obstacles, faith-based and community groups do receive some funding from the Federal government.

Having thus described the current State of Charitable Choice, Ms. Broyles articulated five required steps for implementing Charitable Choice. These steps are:

- **Form a Task Force.** A Task Force of committed individuals with the proper authority can perform several functions essential to successful implementation of Charitable Choice. These include (1) conducting a review of procurement policies to ensure compliance; (2) proposing reforms to eliminate statutory, regulatory, bureaucratic, and contracting barriers facing faith-based and community providers, and; (3) proposing implementation strategies which ensure compliance with US and State Constitutions.

Educate agency officials. Charitable Choice implementation may require “culture change” for State agency personnel. “Agency officials—and, in particular, those that would be interfacing with faith-based and community groups—must be educated as to the new rules. Intra-agency memoranda and staff briefings should be utilized for this purpose.”

Review and, where necessary, revise contracting documents to eliminate language that is inconsistent with Charitable Choice. The language of any policy, request for proposal, contract, grant, and/or other contracting document must reflect the new provisions of Charitable Choice.

Require faith-based providers to meet the Charitable Choice protections afforded to clients. As described above, Charitable Choice includes protections on the rights of clients. The State must ensure that these protections are extended by faith-based groups with which the State operates contracts.

Meet the alternative service requirement of PRWORA. One protection afforded clients under Charitable Choice is the right to receive services from a secular provider if they so desire. This “alternative service” provision can be challenging for some States. States must either make comparable services available from a secular provider, or provide the services internally (i.e. not contract them out but perform them in-house).

In addition to these measures necessary to ensure full compliance with the law, Ms. Broyles commended to the participants six strategies for developing successful collaborations with faith- and community-based groups.

Simplify the procurement process. A thorough review and, where possible, streamlining of procurement documents and processes will facilitate greater participation for small, community-based organizations.

Provide education and outreach regarding procurement processes. Small, community- and faith-based groups require accessible information that is tailored to meet their specific needs. Technological innovations (e.g., Internet) offer new opportunities for effective outreach and should be better utilized.

Provide technical assistance. In addition to education regarding the Charitable Choice law, faith-based and community organizations need technical assistance to improve or develop skills such as grant-writing, 501(c)(3) filing/formation, and general capacity building.

Speed reimbursement to faith-based and community groups. The requirement to outlay significant funds and wait for reimbursement is an insurmountable barrier for several faith-based and community providers. Modifications to contract performance

measures related to time should be explored along with alternative payment mechanisms (e.g., up-front per capita payments, payments on a set schedule).

Create liaisons in each major geographical area of the State. A liaison based in each major geographical area (e.g., county) of a State supports partnerships with the community-based providers by serving as a point of contact and clearinghouse of information. This resident expert should be conversant in both the issues facing the State and those facing potential partners. This dual knowledge will enable the liaison to serve as a bridge between the two.

Use intermediary organizations. Use of an intermediary organization, typically a mid-size to large group with experience in contracting with the Federal government, to administer smaller contracts is a useful strategy for several reasons. First, it negates the lack of capacity and/or institutional knowledge of smaller faith- and community-based organizations. Second, the intermediary deals with the documentation and regulatory requirements, which can intimidate or overwhelm smaller organizations. Finally, the intermediary organization is the sole contractor to the Federal government, thereby simplifying the procurement process.

In the final section of her presentation, Ms. Broyles focused on implementation strategies States should adopt in order to avoid violating Constitutional prohibitions on Establishment of Religion and/or clients' Free Exercise rights. These four strategies include:

Use religion-neutral criteria in procurement. According to Charitable Choice, faith-based providers must be considered on an equal basis with other providers. This means that, in addition to avoiding discriminating against these providers, the State must not set aside funds particularly for contracting with the faith community (to do so would violate the Establishment clause). Rather, all would-be providers must be considered equally.

Prohibit expenditures of public funds on religious activities. States must make sure that protections exist to avoid the expenditure of public dollars on inherently religious activities (also a violation of the Establishment clause). Such activities are those not directly related to the public/secular goals of the program, but only to the furtherance of the religious/spiritual objectives of the provider.

Avoid coercive actions regarding clients' receiving services from a faith-based provider. Clients must be free to choose (or not) a faith-based provider at their own discretion. In order to ensure this freedom, States must avoid any coercion (e.g. the attachment of incentive condition or penalty to a particular choice and honest and thorough provision of information and referral [to include all options]).

Create a procedure by which clients can voice concerns regarding discrimination, proselytizing, and/or alternative service providers. The State

must ensure that an accessible mechanism is in place to support clients in voicing their concerns regarding religious discrimination, services being conditioned on participation in religious activities, objection to a faith-based provider and the resultant invocation of the right to an alternative provider, and any other issue surrounding the protection of clients' rights.

3. AN URBAN MINISTRY MODEL OF SUCCESS

Phillip Bray, Founder and President, SafeHouse Outreach Ministries

Through his program, SafeHouse Outreach Ministries, Phillip Bray has served over 380,000 people. He and his staff believe that changing lives, leads to changed communities, changed cities, and, eventually, a changed nation. His operating philosophy remains, "preach at all times. If necessary, use words."

"An urban church strategically located in downtown Atlanta [providing] services and ministry to those who have 'slipped through the cracks' of traditional churches," the mission of SafeHouse is to "impact lives, families, and communities with faith, hope, and love in action. Most importantly, SafeHouse strives to personify Jesus and to give love to the loveless. SafeHouse conducts outreach and community education regarding the needs of those it reaches." A dynamic and creative ministry, SafeHouse holds some type of activity/service every night of the week. Some of programs supported by SafeHouse include:

"Feed My Lambs"—Tuition free Christian Academy, Monday, Thursday, and Friday, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Pre-school for 3- and 4-year old children from poverty stricken areas. While the children are attending classes, we offer job training, GED classes, and job placement for their mothers. The children are fed two hot meals and exposed to Christian teachings.

YouthReach America—The YouthReach America After School Program held its first site in the spring of '99. YouthReach is a safe, educational, fun Christ-centered atmosphere for middle school aged youth. During the hours of 3-6 p.m., Monday - Friday, students attend small group activities, receive homework assistance, arts and crafts, and daily devotions. YouthReach now has several locations through out the southeast and seeks to expand across the country.

SafeHouse Family Resource Center—The SafeHouse Family Resource Center offers resources through counseling, assistance and friendship to women in crisis pregnancy situations. Free sonograms and pregnancy tests are available. We also offer resources to their families through parenting classes, Mentoring Moms and Mentoring Dads programs, tuition-free preschool for their children and counseling for family reconciliation.

More information on this urban ministry is available on their Web site at: <http://www.safehouse-outreach.org>.

During his presentation, Mr. Bray highlighted one project in which SafeHouse was involved in meeting the needs of the homeless of Atlanta. At one point, some of Atlanta's homeless people established a community under a bridge in downtown Atlanta. This "town," comprised of various makeshift residences installed a mayor and dubbed itself "Hutsville," as announced on the sign welcoming visitors to the area. After hosting a bonfire in the area as means of meeting these people where they were, SafeHouse partnered with the Office of the Mayor of Atlanta, and several private companies (including the major utility companies in the area) to establish Covenant Agreements by which the residents of Hutsville were moved into six different apartment complexes on 6-month leases. SafeHouse, the most flexible and unrestrained of the partners, signed the leases for these 78 apartments. By offering the former residents of Hutsville not only a clean, safe place to live but the skills and services (food, support groups, medical care, substance abuse rehabilitation, job search, etc) they needed to maintain their new lifestyles, at the end of six months, 50 of the 78 leases were transferred from SafeHouse to the new occupants.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Bray was traveling to Washington, DC to meet with President Bush regarding the Compassion Capital Fund.

IV. THE STATE PERSPECTIVE

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In addition to the national outreach efforts mentioned above, several States have effectively operationalized Charitable Choice provisions in their TANF programs. Below, two successful strategies are presented.

1. GETTING THINGS STARTED AND MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM

Thurl B. Snell, Deputy Director, Division of Family and Children, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration

As Deputy Director of the Bureau of Family Resources within the Division of Family and Children, Ms. Snell has over thirty years experience in such areas as children's services, family resources, policy planning, and program development. Currently, Ms. Snell is responsible for the monitoring and supervision of all benefit programs (TANF, Food Stamps, Medicaid, IMPACT), Indiana's Client Eligibility System (ECES), Community Services and Housing programs, and the implementation of the Electronic Benefit Transfer program (EBT) in Indiana. Ms. Snell was invited to share Indiana's strategies for successful implementing Charitable Choice both initially and over time.

In the initial implementation stages of FaithWORKS Indiana, Governor Frank O'Bannon and now-SE Hub Director Carlis Williams were both instrumental in taking the first steps. The statewide implementation effort included all 92 counties. 70 percent of Indiana's counties are rural and this illustrated the lesson that the implementation strategies can not be "one size fits all." Because of the varied demographics and capacities of the counties, the State of Indiana contracted for statewide TA services. Prior to implementation, a survey of 400 congregations across all 92 counties was conducted to assess concerns and TA needs.

Today, 400 faith-based organizations have requested technical assistance that has included individual consultations as well as facilitated workshops and roundtables. The primary issue of concern cited by FBOs today is the concept of separation of church and State. Ms. Snell emphasized the non-sectarian nature of the services provided by the FBOs under contract with the State. Further, Ms. Snell highlighted the protections in place for clients' rights, specifically with respect to access to alternative service providers.

Currently, Indiana is focusing on the following priorities for FaithWORKS:

- Monitoring procedures
- Evaluation of service quality and client outcomes
- Technical assistance and capacity building
- On-going communication
- Rural outreach
- Measuring and evaluating the informal networks already in place
- Additional funding streams.

2. THE NORTH CAROLINA EXPERIENCE: BUILDING COLLABORATIONS

Deborah Landry, Assistant Chief, Program Operations, North Carolina Division of Social Services

As a county-administered TANF State, North Carolina has a total of 100 counties of two types of counties: standard and electing. Much of the authority and responsibility for the faith-based initiative is devolved to the counties. However, the State does retain some Federal funding for the operation of a job retention and follow-up program which was the main focus of the presentation.

The State contracted with the Rural Economic Development Center, Inc. (REDC), an organization established in 1987 to support rural innovation and development initiatives, to operate a new job retention demonstration project. The REDC serves two functions under the contract. First, they operate internal demonstration projects and, secondly, they issue grants to other programs to support the testing and evaluation of other methodologies. Each of the proposals for pilot programs was judged competitively and, in the original issuance, all of these grants were won by faith-based subcontractors.

At this point in her presentation, Ms. Landry invited Reverend Odell Cleveland, Executive Director of the Welfare Reform Liaison Project, Inc., one of the faith-based providers in NC to share his thoughts about partnering with the State of North Carolina. The Welfare Reform Liaison Project provides job training, educational services, financial assistance, counseling, mentoring, and job placement to low-income individuals (primarily TANF clients) in

Guilford County. The key component of the Project is the Liaison Distribution Job Training Center, a 16,000 square foot building that jointly houses traditional classrooms and an on-the-job training program for participants in the distribution center. Participants receive 11 weeks of work readiness training around such skills as work values, meeting employer expectations, problem solving, conflict resolution, resume development, and interviewing. Additionally, Guilford Technical Community College provides basic computer training, and the Project offers extensive training in all aspects of distribution. For those clients with barriers to work, the Project also offers them a work-training stipend program in the Distribution Center for \$8.00 per hour.

The philosophy of the Welfare Reform Liaison Project, Inc. is to support their participants in becoming stronger members of their communities, thereby improving the community as they give back to it. The Project, recognized many times for its excellence, has been replicated in Charlotte, NC and Sarasota, FL. At the start of its third year, 89 students had completed the program, 80 percent of whom were employed or in job training. Graduates were earning about \$8.00 an hour on average.

V. CONCLUSION

V. CONCLUSION

Approximately 80 people participated in the day-long meeting, taking advantage of the opportunities to network with other government officials and with faith-based providers. A ‘resource table’ provided participants an opportunity to both share and gather information related to the provisions of Charitable Choice, grant opportunities, and partnerships currently underway across the southeastern States and around the country.

Evaluations, presented in Appendix A, indicate an overall level of satisfaction and many perceived benefits from the workshop. As partnerships with the faith-based community continue to grow in national prominence, participants at this workshop developed valuable knowledge and skills to help them develop successful, long-term, outcomes-oriented partnerships with the faith-based community.

**APPENDIX A:
EVALUATIONS**

Conference were asked to rate the services provided at the *Strengthening Communities Through Charitable Choice Connections* conference by rating the following statements on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

| | <i>Strongly Disagree</i> | | | | <i>Strongly Agree</i> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|
| | <i>1</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>4</i> | <i>5</i> |
| Conference planners adequately prepared you for the meeting by providing clear written and verbal communication regarding the meeting's purpose and expected outcomes. (n=20) | 0% | 0% | 5% | 55% | 40% |
| Conference planners handled the preparation, arrangements, and scheduling of the event in a timely, courteous, and competent manner. (n=20) | 0% | 0% | 5% | 35% | 60% |
| The speakers were thorough in the subject areas presented. (n=20) | 0% | 0% | 0% | 30% | 70% |
| The speakers engaged the audience and facilitated interactive discussions. (n=20) | 0% | 0% | 0% | 40% | 60% |
| The information will be useful to me/my staff in developing new approaches to my organization's faith program. (n=19) | 0% | 0% | 5% | 37% | 58% |

Participants were also asked to provide narrative comments on their experiences with the conference:

What did you find most useful about attending this conference (i.e., any immediate or long-term benefits to you/your staff that you anticipate as a result of attending this conference, etc.)?

Always good to revisit own programs and review against what else is going on -- will check own policy and contracts to ensure compliance.

Clarification of current law and pending legislation.

Better understand the requirements of Charitable Choice.

The clarification of exactly what Charitable Choice is/is not and the requirements of human service agencies.

- The opportunity to network with various faith- and community-based organization around the Southeast and the country. The opportunity to establish a mailing list of faith- and community-based organizations for future reference.
- Charitable Choice overview and strategies for getting things started.
- Resource materials.
- Information on the legal aspects of Charitable Choice.
- Bringing [participants] up-to-date on government practices and progress. Forum for asking questions and making contacts.
- Heightened awareness.
- It was helpful to find out about other programs in the region and nation to assist our customers and improve our service delivery. The long-term benefits are immeasurable to our client population (i.e., empowerment, self-sufficiency for families). Identifying funding [sources] was an asset of the conference.
- Transferring information about results in real places and States doing something to move this forward.
- Networking, meeting other people.

What issues would you like to have had more discussion about during the conference?

- Best practices.
- Impartial, unbiased views; opinions for those in support and those that have concerns about Charitable Choice.
- More technical details on hiring practices under Charitable Choice (Title VII)
- A discussion of the various programs which are faith-based or have a faith component
- Program eligibility.
- Any barriers other States have worked through—what they were and how they did it.
- How the different programs can work together. How collaboration has worked.
- The sponsorship of regional faith-based conferences is essential in getting the word out about Charitable Choice.
- Collaborations.

- Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-21, A-110, and A-133.
- Faith-based organizations' presentations were excellent and moving. However, more information was needed on how much time/resources are needed to attain and manage government funding.

Is there anything you can think of that would have made the conference more valuable to you (i.e., how could this technical assistance have better met your needs, etc.)?

- None. Everything was excellent.
- To have some roundtables to discuss how overcoming barriers is working with different agencies.
- To acknowledge the Federal agencies and the areas they fund. For examples, homeless grants, community health centers, HIV, etc. This type of information would be very beneficial to the participants seeking funding.
- [Hearing from] a client who has benefited would have been helpful.
- More involvement from local agencies.
- Wider distribution of invitations, especially in Alabama.
- Negotiating indirect cost rate agreements.
- Pairing agencies with ministries to learn more about how we can work together.

Additional Comments

- Very good conference.
- Travel planning and hotel were less than ideal.
- The agenda for both days should have been handed out to participants earlier.
- Phillip Bray was inspiring!
- I believe the conference was well-planned. I was completely moved by Phillip Bray's presentation and would encourage stories such as his in future conferences.
- Very well organized and relevant [to] today.
- Enjoyed [the conference] very much. Allowed us to hear all sides and realize we have a heart for the same things.

- More communication with other Federal agencies regarding the faith-based initiatives. More collaboration is needed.
- The conference dealt with what matters most: people and families. A great conference. A great network of practitioners who are listening.
- Great forum. Thanks!
- Good job.
- Should have more faith-based organizations present. Seemed very government-focused.

APPENDIX B:
AGENDA



12:00 - 1:30 P.M.

WORKING LUNCH

“AN URBAN MINISTRY MODEL OF SUCCESS”

**PHILIP BRAY, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT SAFEHOUSE
OUTREACH MINISTRIES, ATLANTA**

1:30 – 2:30 P.M.

**“THE STATE PERSPECTIVE: GETTING THINGS STARTED
AND MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM”**

**THURL SNELL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DIVISION
OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN, INDIANA FAMILY
AND SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**

2:30 – 2:45 P.M.

BREAK

2:45 – 3:45 P.M.

**“THE NORTH CAROLINA EXPERIENCE: BUILDING
COLLABORATIONS”**

**DEBORAH LANDRY, ASSISTANT CHIEF, PROGRAM
OPERATIONS, DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

3:45 – 4:00 P.M.

“GEORGIA FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE TASKFORCE”

**MICHELLE K. UCHIYAMA, COORDINATOR
REPRESENTING GEORGIA LEGISLATORS – SENATOR
DONZELLA JAMES AND REPRESENTATIVE CLINT SMITH**

4:00 P.M.

CONFERENCE WRAP-UP/CLOSING



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SPEAKERS AND PARTICIPANTS**



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