



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

<http://finance.senate.gov>

MEMORANDUM

To: Reporters and Editors
Re: Welfare program re-authorization
Da: Wednesday, June 23, 3004

Sen. Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Finance Committee, today made the following comment on a letter from the Republican Governors Association urging enactment of a five-year re-authorization of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) during this session of Congress.

“I completely agree that Congress needs to complete action on the re-authorization of the welfare bill. However, time is running out.

“As my colleagues will recall, Senate Majority Leader Frist scheduled a week at the end of March for consideration of the welfare bill. The first amendment offered was an amendment I offered on behalf of Senator Olympia Snowe to increase mandatory child care funding by \$6 billion over the \$1 billion that was in the bill reported by the Senate Finance Committee.

“The next amendment offered was an amendment to increase the minimum wage. It has been reported that this amendment is what derailed the process and created the situation we find ourselves in today. That is not the case. The obstacle to proceeding to enactment of the welfare bill is not over getting a vote on the minimum wage – the obstacle is Democrats are unwilling to let the bill go to conference. By refusing to agree to a unanimous consent agreement to appoint conferees, Democrats have prevented enactment of the re-authorization of welfare reform.

“I’m looking at ways to break this logjam, and I hope we can do it and get a welfare bill enacted into law this year.”