



**Legislative Bulletin.....December 15, 2011**

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**H.R. 3659**—Welfare Integrity and Data Improvement Act

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**H.R. 3659 — Welfare Integrity and Data Improvement Act (Paulsen, R-MN)**

**Order of Business:** The bill is scheduled to be considered on Thursday, December 15, 2011 under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

**Summary:** The legislation extends the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program through September 30, 2012. The program would otherwise expire at the end of 2011. The funding level provided in the legislation is the same as the baseline (as well as current spending levels), \$16.5 billion on an annualized basis.

The legislation requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish “data standard requirements” intended to provide better data, and sharing of information, on how individuals interact with the various welfare programs.

The legislation also prohibits TANF funds from being accessed at ATMs in strip clubs, liquor stores, and casinos. According to the committee, in California, almost \$5 million of TANF benefits were withdrawn from casinos during the three and a half years from January 2007 to the middle of 2010. This provision is enforced by requiring states to report back to the Secretary that they are implementing it, or lose 5 percent of TANF funds.

**Additional Background:** This legislation was part of H.R. 3630, the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act.

**Committee Action:** The legislation was introduced on December 14, 2011 and referred to the House Ways and Means Committee which took no public action.

**Cost to Taxpayers:** The legislation extends the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program through September 30, 2012. The program would otherwise expire at the end of 2011. The funding level provided in the legislation is the same as the baseline (as well as current spending levels), \$16.5 billion on an annualized basis.

**Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?:** No.

**Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?:** No CBO report with this information is available.

**Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?:** The legislation contains no earmarks.

**Constitutional Authority:** According to the sponsor: “Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to ‘provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.’”

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