

In 1896, in Toledo, OH, Joseph Blackburn, the Food and Dairy Commissioner for Ohio, met with his counterpart from Michigan, Elliot Grosvenor, to develop the foundation for an organization whose mission would be defined by the promotion of regulatory uniformity.

The initial meeting of the National Association of State Dairy and Food Departments, which later became the Association of Food and Drug Officials, occurred on August 25, 1897, at the Cadillac Hotel in Detroit, MI. This meeting was attended by representatives from ten States.

Since its inception 100 years ago, the AFDO has provided the basis for the furthering of uniform and rational regulations and the forum for the exchanging of ideas and the creation of solutions that win approval of both government and industry. The AFDO has also successfully ameliorated the status of consumer protection in the United States, and it has been in the forefront in support of crucial legislation such as the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the formation of the Association of Food and Drug Officials. I know they will continue their proud tradition on into the next century.

TAIWAN NEEDS US

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I am happy today to give strong support for the resolution introduced yesterday by Mr. COX, myself, the Republican leadership and 82 bipartisan Members, expressing our continued and unequivocal support for the Republic of China on Taiwan. Mr. Speaker, the Clinton administration's response to the increasingly strident threats made toward the Republic of China has been almost nonexistent. They have pointedly refused to commit to the Republic of China's defense in the event that Communist China should invade or attack our friends in Taiwan. The administration's deliberate ambiguity in this matter sends absolutely the wrong message to Beijing, and practically invites an escalation of an already tense situation.

The Taiwan Relations Act—the law of the land in our dealings with the Republic of China, despite what Beijing would care to think, has at its core our desire to see disputes between Communist China and the Republic of China settled peacefully. We must make it clear to the rulers in Beijing that the United States intends to live up to its commitments under this law, and I think that this resolution will help to demonstrate in no uncertain terms that we take this obligation very seriously.

I would ask all of my colleagues here in the House to support House Concurrent Resolution 148. The people of the Republic of China on Taiwan need us, and the dictators in Beijing need to hear from us.

THE FAMILY SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 1996

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to introduce the Family Service Improvement Act of 1996 this afternoon. I have been working on the concepts behind this legislation for a number of years. The Family Service Improvement Act will eliminate Federal redtape and unnecessary regulation. It will give local programs the flexibility they need to address local problems. It should create incentives for program coordination which serves kids and families better while making more efficient use of our resources. And it will demand accountability based on program results, not on process and paperwork.

I believe that a concerted Federal effort to rationalize and coordinate programs for children and families is long overdue. Over the years, Congress has created hundreds of categorical programs to help communities and families deal with the myriad of issues confronting them. Each of the programs was created with its own rules and regulations to deal with a particular problem. Over time, the list of rules and regulations has grown to stifle, rather than support, the very objectives we are trying to achieve.

In some areas, where local needs don't fit the problems covered by our categorical programs, our services for children and families are vastly inadequate. In other areas, services overlap and duplicate each other. For example, multiple programs may provide caseworkers to a single family, but each caseworker deals only with one aspect of that family's needs.

In many programs, caseworkers spend far too much time dealing with redtape and paperwork, juggling multiple programs with multiple eligibility criteria, application processes, and service requirements. The Federal Government has created hundreds of different taps through which assistance flows—and communities, programs, and families must run from tap to tap with a bucket to get the help they need.

As an appropriator, I am particularly concerned that our tax dollars be spent efficiently and effectively. In 1994, I asked the Department of Education to convene a working group on coordinated services to make recommendations for such a Federal effort. The working group was headed by Jeanne Jehl from the San Diego public schools, whom I would like to thank for her outstanding work. The working group, which met through 1995, included Federal employees and people from State and local governments and organizations across the country. I was particularly pleased that Maryland's outstanding Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, was able to participate in this effort. The Family Service Improvement Act is based on the recommendations of that group.

FEDERAL FIXES FOR FEDERAL PROBLEMS

While I applaud the efforts of several of my colleagues in developing waiver bills which are now under consideration by this Congress, I believe that the Federal Government—not local programs—should have the responsibility of fixing the problems the Federal Government

created. Under the Family Service Improvement Act, a Federal Coordination Council is designated to oversee the effort to eliminate regulations, simplify requirements, and make waiver requests unnecessary. The Council's responsibilities include eliminating unnecessary and burdensome regulations; developing a single eligibility and application form for a range of services to children and families; developing a single information release form which can be used to authorize exchange of information among a number of service providers; and developing RFP's which can be used to apply for funding from multiple Federal programs.

INTERDISCIPLINARY COORDINATION

No effort to make services to families more effective and efficient will succeed unless programs which meet different aspects of family needs are better coordinated with each other. Cross-program coordination is the key to improving service quality and efficiency. The Family Service Improvement Act allows the creation of consortia of program providers in a community. Consortia members could include State, local, or tribal governments, and not-for-profit organizations. Each consortium must include providers in at least three of the program areas of education, Head Start, child care, job training, housing, nutrition, maternal and child health, family support and preservation, juvenile justice, and drug abuse prevention and treatment. In addition, it creates several incentives to encourage coordination, reduce program duplication, and improve services.

INCENTIVES FOR COORDINATION

As any State or local official who has been involved in the process will tell you, requesting a waiver from the Federal Government is time consuming and complicated. Where multiple programs are duplicating the same steps, common sense dictates that they ought to be able to join forces without going through the hoops of requesting a waiver.

For example, authorizing legislation requires many programs to assess community needs each year and to provide case managers to assist families. We certainly want programs to plan based on community needs, and to perform case management, but it simply doesn't make sense for each program to repeat work done by several others. Under the Family Service Improvement Act, a consortium of three programs which are required to do a community needs assessment and to provide a case worker to the same family would be automatically exempted from meeting such duplicative requirements as long as the requirement was met by the consortium or one of its members. Consortia will then be permitted to spend these funds to expand or improve their services.

In addition, the Family Service Improvement Act would allow consortia to set aside up to 10 percent of their Federal funds in a flexible fund. This flexible fund must be used to expand or improve services consistent with the programs run by the consortium. This provision will give service providers much needed flexibility to meet local needs which might not be anticipated by our Federal rules and regulations.

ACCOUNTABILITY

What counts in human service programs is performance: Are our programs working? Instead of measuring input and process, we