

Kansas Department of

Social and Rehabilitation Services

Gary Daniels, Secretary

Joint Committee on Children' s Issues

September 27, 2006

Update on Grandparents as Caregivers Program

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For additional information contact:

Public and Governmental Services Division
Kyle Kessler, Deputy Secretary

Docking State Office Building
915 SW Harrison, 6th Floor North
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1570
phone: 785.296.0141
fax: 785.296.4685
www.srs.ks.gov

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Chairwoman O' Conner and members of the committee. I am Gary Daniels, Secretary of SRS. I want to bring you up to date on the Department' s implementation plans around the new Grandparents as Caregivers Program originating from passage of Senate Bill 62 last session.

As you will recall the program will provide monthly benefits to grandparents and other qualifying relatives age 50 and older who have legal custody of their grandchildren. The household income must be less than 130% of the federal poverty level in order to qualify. I have attached to this testimony a fact sheet providing this basic information along with the current income limits. The program is slated to begin on January 1, 2007.

Department staff have been meeting regularly over the Summer in anticipation of the start date and developing necessary system support, materials, policy guidance, and staff training to make for a smooth start up. A special one page application is being developed to allow for simplified access to the program. Informational materials have been drafted for use in SRS offices and with our many community and agency partners, including the Department on Aging. We are also developing a resource book to provide information not only about the new program but other agency and community help that is available to support grandparents who are raising their grandchildren.

Current plans are to begin marketing the program in late November and early December and to have applications available for the public by mid-December. Application processing will begin officially on January 2 and benefits available that month. We are excited to be able to offer this new benefit and the beneficial impact it will have on both grandparents and the grandchildren they are caring for. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.