

Kansas Department of

Social and Rehabilitation Services

Don Jordan, Secretary

Public Assistance and Immigration

February 26, 2008

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present information regarding public assistance and immigration. Documentation of citizenship or legal status is required for all state-funded assistance programs. For programs funded with federal funds, SRS adheres to federal laws and regulations which govern citizenship documentation. This includes verification of legal status of all non-citizens through the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system for all public assistance programs.

Human Service Assistants in SRS field offices are the gatekeepers for public assistance programs. They take steps to ensure that only eligible persons receive benefits in accordance with federal and state policy. SRS subsequently conducts state-initiated supervisory case reviews. Since 2004, 28,292 food stamp cases and 6,002 TAF cases have been reviewed. These supervisory reviews corrected twelve incorrect initial determinations, providing six eligible recipients with their benefits and preventing six ineligible persons from receiving benefits.

Federal agencies also mandate formal quality control reviews which involve randomly sampling cases, home visits with recipients, matching data with SAVE and Social Security Administration databases, and contacts with employers and landlords. Between 2004 and 2007, federal quality control programs reviewed over 4,000 open cases and 2,700 negative (denied or closed) cases. They identified three errors. One was a \$93 overpayment to an ineligible non-citizen, which was recovered. In the other two cases, eligible non-citizens were denied benefits they qualified for.

Federal law mandates that states provide emergency health services, public health services, child welfare and child support enforcement assistance to non-citizens not lawfully present in the United States. Because we have exhaustive verification processes in place for all other services, the proposed state legislation would have no impact on our agency operations and would have no fiscal impact.

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