



# THE POLICY PAGE

An update on state and federal action from

## The Center for Public Policy Priorities

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### Special Policy Alert: TIES Public Hearing Coming to El Paso Next Week

**The Texas Integrated Enrollment and Services Project (TIES) Legislative Oversight Committee (LOC) will hold a public hearing in El Paso at 9:00 AM on April 7, 1998 in Neil Auditorium at the College of Business Administration, The University of Texas at El Paso, 500 West University.**

The Center for Public Policy Priorities and other advocates will host a briefing for interested individuals and/or organizations in El Paso the day before the hearing. The briefing is at 10:00 AM on April 6, 1998 at the Sarah Lea Building (YWCA/United Way offices) at 1918 Texas, in the United Way Board Room, which is accessible from the west end of the parking lot. For additional directions you can call Blanca Orona at the YWCA, 915-577-9922 x243.

It is very important that the committee hears from the local community about how significant changes to the eligibility and enrollment processes for many health, human service and workforce programs might improve or worsen access for clients. Brief testimony or anecdotes about client experiences will provide a vital perspective on the far-reaching impact of this project.

The TIES project is the state's initiative to integrate the eligibility and enrollment processes for multiple health, human service and workforce programs. You may remember the significant policy debates surrounding this project during the last legislative session. The result of those debates was HB 2777, which scaled back and redirected the project. This legislation also mandated public hearings around the state which is why the TIES LOC is coming to El Paso. For a detailed history of this initiative refer to Policy Page number 56. Call or email the Center for a copy of this publication at 512-320-0222 or [cppp@cppp.org](mailto:cppp@cppp.org). You can also find out more about the TIES project by accessing the project's website at: [www.hhsc.state.tx.us/ties97](http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/ties97).

For many months now a team of staff from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the Texas Department of Health, the Texas Department of Human

#### The TIES Legislative Oversight Committee

Senate	House
Bill Ratliff, Chair (R, Mt. Pleasant)	Robert Junell (D, San Angelo)
Judith Zaffirini (D, Laredo)	Harvey Hilderbran (R, Kerrville)
John Carona (R, Dallas)	Glen Maxey (D, Austin)

Services and the Texas Workforce Commission, together with contractors from EDS, have been examining every aspect of the current eligibility and enrollment systems to design a more integrated, streamlined approach that will combine access to nearly 50 state programs. They have taken many cues from successful private industry solutions and are developing a plan to reconfigure the existing systems. The approach they are developing would significantly shift much of the initial eligibility and enrollment to a phone access system. They are developing a model which will then form the basis for an RFP to seek a contractor to develop and implement the new system –from computer hardware and software to a “re-engineering” of current processes. At this point the plan does not include any privatization of the actual state eligibility and enrollment workforce. However, their roles and duties will shift significantly.

A coalition of state level organizations who work on issues affecting clients and consumers as well as unions representing state workers have been closely monitoring the new phase of TIES over the past year. We have been working on a statement of principles and other guidelines, which we believe should control the development and implementation of this project. These will be available at the April 6th briefing. Critical decisions about this project will be made soon. Issues of governance, scope, and cost benefit analysis all must be resolved in coming weeks and a final plan is due to be presented to the Governor and LBB this month.

**It is essential that the TIES Legislative Oversight Committee receive feedback at the coming public hearing. Please consider attending our briefing on April 6th and providing comments to the committee the following day. For more information call Patrick Bresette at the Center 512-320-0222.**

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