



Record Group: Governor's Task Force on Welfare Management
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Institutional History

Created by Governor Richard J. Hughes in October 1969, the Governor's Task Force on Welfare Management consisted of eight members, assisted by a small staff. Governor Hughes named Francis W. Brennan as Chairman, and Robert G. Williams as Staff Director. The task force continued to operate under Hughes' successor, William T. Cahill.

As its primary function, the task force served as a research and advisory board for the purpose of evaluation and proposing possible changes in New Jersey's public welfare system. The task force was formed against the backdrop of massive public dissatisfaction with both state and national assistance programs. In the decade preceding its formation, welfare rolls had nearly doubled nationally, and in New Jersey, public assistance costs increased from \$59 million in 1966 to \$216 million in 1971. These rising costs heightened traditional public fears that welfare payments disrupted families, encouraged illegitimacy, and undercut the work ethic.

The more immediate impetus for forming the task force came from the need to review President Richard Nixon's proposals for welfare reform, which were issued to congress on 2 October 1969, and to assess their impact on New Jersey. Nixon called for a Family Assistance Plan (FAP), which guaranteed a minimum grant of \$1,600 per year for a family of four. It was designed to reduce bureaucratic red tape, sustain the poor's incentive to work, and supplant welfare dependency. In its report, "Impact of Proposed Federal Welfare Legislation in New Jersey," the task force advocated accepting the Family Assistance Plan, with certain modifications.

The task force also suggested a number of ways in which the state's welfare system could be streamlined, including state assumption from local governments of welfare administration, and recommended the elimination of some of the more onerous requirements for receiving public assistance. These recommendations were outlined in the task force's "Preliminary Report," issued 18 January 1970, and subsequently elaborated on in more detailed studies.

At the end of 1971, the task force was merged into the Office of Management and Planning, serving within the Department of Institutions and Agencies. In 1975, this agency was renamed the Office of Human Services Planning.

Content Note

The records of the task force consist of interoffice communications, staff reports, official task force reports, and correspondence with the Governor and various other officials within the state government. The files are divided into the following series: subject files, correspondence, and minutes. The subject files, arranged alphabetically, consist

principally of newsclippings. The "correspondence files," which are arranged chronologically, relate principally to communication with the Governor's Office and external agencies and organizations. The minutes of the task force board round out the collection.

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Box 2. Subject Files

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Box 5

Correspondence, July 1969 - May 1971

Minutes, 29 October 1969 - 24 March 1971

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