

**REPORT OF THE
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**WELFARE REFORM
IN THE CULPEPER AND
LYNCHBURG REGIONS**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



SENATE DOCUMENT NO. 12

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

James S. Gilmore, III
Governor

Claude A. Allen
Secretary of Health and Human Resources

December 11, 1998

TO: The Honorable James S. Gilmore, III

and

The General Assembly

The report contained herein is pursuant to the Senate Joint Resolution 356 as approved by the 1997 General Assembly.

As required by Senate Joint Resolution 356, the Virginia Department of Social Services, at the request of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, conducted a two-year study on how the Culpeper and Lynchburg Economic Development Districts have succeeded in helping Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients to become self-sufficient. This second report explores the status and initiatives of welfare reform within a context of local social and economic environments.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Claude A. Allen'.

Claude A. Allen

Executive Summary

As Virginia counties and cities have implemented welfare reform initiatives and are empowering Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients to find and maintain employment, questions about long-term effects and resource availability remain. The following study arose from concerns about how the first two Economic Development Districts, the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions, have succeeded in helping TANF recipients become self-sufficient. This study has found that creative approaches to community resources and services have enhanced the successes of welfare reform and that transportation, daycare, employment, and health insurance problems have not become as pervasive as expected.

The following draft represents the initial findings. Extensive data collection and analyses are currently being conducted by Mathematica to examine the impact of welfare reform on TANF recipients. Preliminary findings will be available in January 1999, with the final report available to the General Assembly in April 1999.

Welfare Reform in the Culpeper and Lynchburg Regions

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Introduction

The Virginia Independence Program (VIP) was passed by the General Assembly in February 1995 for recipients of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), the program that replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children. A key component to the VIP program is the VIEW program (Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare.) The VIEW program requires employment or work experience and an agreement of personal responsibility as conditions of TANF benefits. Families may receive TANF up to two years in Virginia and the state provides incentives for increased earnings, employment, and savings.

Study charge

Senate Joint Resolution No. 356, as passed by the 1997 General Assembly, requires the following:

"RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, with the assistance of the Advisory Commission on Welfare Reform, be requested to study methods to ensure the continued success of Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) clients as they work toward self-sufficiency. In conducting the study, the Secretary shall include, but not be limited to, expanding employment opportunities, increasing the availability and accessibility of quality child day care and transportation assistance, expanding training and education opportunities, and examining health care availability."

Appendix I contains the Senate Resolution 356 that mandates the study of the Economic Development Districts that first implemented welfare reform and of the first TANF recipients who received welfare reform services.

Background

Welfare reform initiatives were first implemented on July 1, 1995, in the counties of Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock (Economic Development District 7) with Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell Counties, and the cities of Bedford and Lynchburg (Economic Development District 9) following three months later. The first welfare reform sites reported great success with reducing caseloads and increasing self-sufficiency, spurring on heightened interest by other Virginia localities to implement welfare reform. Other states, encouraged by Virginia's initial findings, developed similar initiatives.

With all Virginia localities currently enacting welfare reform policies, the General Assembly has questioned the longevity of the initial successes. Concerned that clients who reached TANF limits may be unable to achieve or maintain self-sufficiency, the General Assembly requested follow-up study of the first two Economic Development Districts to implement welfare reform.

This study is the second part of a two-part investigation of Economic Development Districts 7 and 9. The study explores the status and initiatives of welfare reform within a context of local social and economic environments. Key issues explored include poverty, employment, TANF reciprocity, and characteristics of TANF recipients. The success of VIEW recipients to gain and maintain employment relies on their ability to access employment opportunities, child day care, transportation, training and education, and health care.

Culpeper and Lynchburg Regions

(Economic Development Districts 7 and 9)

Poverty research centers, including the Urban Institute, the Institute for Research on Poverty, and American Public Human Services Association warn that dropping caseloads are not indicators of successful welfare reform initiatives. Increased earnings, employment opportunities, reliable transportation, aggressive child support collections, comprehensive health insurance, available and affordable childcare, and education and training are all needed to insure self-sufficiency.

Poverty

Poverty rates in the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions are slightly lower than Virginia's averages, with the exception of the low-wage localities of Lynchburg, Appomattox, Amherst, and Madison. As shown on Table 1, one in eight persons in these localities lives in poverty, except in Lynchburg where one in five persons is under the poverty level.

The poverty levels in both the Economic Development Districts (EDDs) studied and in the state are under the national poverty rates. Currently, only about 13 percent of Lynchburg area residents and 10 percent of Culpeper area residents earn under the poverty levels, in comparison to 12 percent of the state and 15 percent of the country.¹

¹ Virginia Statistical Abstract 1996-1997. Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia, 1996.

Employment

Part of the reason for the low poverty levels in these economic districts is the availability of jobs. As shown in Table 2, the localities in EDDs 7 and 9 have unemployment rates that have dropped over two percent between implementation of welfare reform and now. In fact, all of the localities studied have current unemployment rates that are less than half of their rates before welfare reform.

	Population		Diff.	1990 1993 1993			1997	% of Population in	
	1990	1997		Under Poverty Level	Percent	Percent		Diff.	Number
				Percent	Percent	Diff.		Stamps	TANF
EDD 7									
Culpeper	27,791	32,000	15.1%	8.7%	11.7%	3.0%	3,744	27.4%	4.2%
Fauquier	48,860	51,900	6.2%	4.2%	7.1%	2.9%	3,685	27.5%	4.7%
Madison	11,949	12,500	4.6%	13.4%	13.3%	-0.1%	1,663	24.1%	2.3%
Orange	21,421	24,400	13.9%	7.3%	10.1%	2.8%	2,464	28.2%	4.9%
Rappahannock	6,622	7,000	5.7%	10.8%	10.2%	-0.6%	714	22.7%	2.1%
EDD 9									
Amherst	28,578	30,200	5.7%	9.8%	12.2%	2.4%	3,684	24.5%	3.9%
Appomattox	12,298	13,100	6.5%	12.4%	13.7%	1.3%	1,795	31.8%	6.8%
Bedford County	51,729	56,100	8.4%	7.0%	8.3%	1.3%	4,656	28.4%	6.1%
Campbell	47,572	49,900	4.9%	10.1%	12.0%	1.9%	5,988	28.1%	5.1%
Bedford	<i>Combined with Bedford County</i>								
Lynchburg	66,049	65,200	-1.3%	16.4%	18.9%	2.5%	12,323	29.2%	6.6%
Statewide	6,189,197	6,734,000	8.8%	10.2%	12.0%	1.8%	808,080	30.8%	6.5%

Table 2

Income and Employment

	Median Family Income			Unemployment Rate		
	<u>1994</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>Difference</u>
EDD 7						
Culpeper	\$ 42,742	\$ 46,329	8.4%	4.5%	1.8%	-2.7%
Fauquier	\$ 58,798	\$ 62,129	5.7%	3.2%	1.4%	-1.8%
Madison	\$ 36,422	\$ 39,781	9.2%	3.8%	1.7%	-2.1%
Orange	\$ 39,882	\$ 43,007	7.8%	4.7%	2.2%	-2.5%
Rappahannock	\$ 43,574	\$ 48,109	10.4%	4.7%	2.6%	-2.1%
TOTAL				3.9%	1.8%	-2.1%
EDD 9						
Amherst	\$ 35,398	\$ 37,114	4.8%	5.1%	1.9%	-3.2%
Appomattox	\$ 34,138	\$ 36,434	6.7%	6.9%	3.3%	-3.6%
Bedford County	\$ 41,072	\$ 44,225	7.7%	3.9%	2.0%	-1.9%
Campbell	\$ 36,772	\$ 39,212	6.6%	4.9%	2.4%	-2.5%
Bedford	\$ 32,281	\$ 34,759	7.7%	<i>Combined with Bedford County</i>		
Lynchburg	\$ 34,914	\$ 37,231	6.6%	5.0%	2.3%	-2.7%
TOTAL				4.8%	2.3%	-2.5%
Statewide	\$ 44,643	\$ 47,549	6.5%	4.9%	2.5%	-2.4%

Source: *Va. Statistical Abstract 1996-1997* and www.VASTAT

TANF Reciprocity

An indicator of resources available, self-sufficiency, and welfare dependency is the number of persons living in poverty who receive welfare benefits. As shown in Table 1, most persons living in poverty within the study localities do not rely on TANF or Food Stamps.

In general, less than one-third of the poverty populations in these districts receive Food Stamps and less than seven percent of the poverty populations receive TANF. These findings suggest that the majority of the persons in poverty are the working poor instead of welfare recipients.

Impact of Welfare Reform on EDDs 7 and 9

Preliminary data from EDDs 7 and 9 indicates that most cases have closed prior to reaching the time limit. The data also shows that most cases,

including those that reached the time limit, have been successful in finding employment. During the first six months of VIEW implementation in EDDs 7 and 9, there were 500 persons that actually enrolled in VIEW. These cases had the potential of meeting the 24 month time limit by January 1998. Only 94 of those cases actually reached the time limit.

Of the original 500 cases, there were 326 VIEW cases that left TANF before reaching the 24 month time limit. Of these cases, 63.2% were employed at the time of their case closure. The remaining cases, including 6.4% of these cases that closed with excess resources or support from another individual, closed because they were no longer eligible for TANF.

Eighty of the original 500 cases were still participating in VIEW in January 1998. These cases had additional time left toward the 24 months of eligibility. Their clocks had stopped either due to temporarily leaving the TANF roles, or becoming exempt from VIEW participation.

Of the 94 cases that reached the time limit, 92% were employed when their cases closed. Most (83%) were working 30 or more hours per week at the time of case closure.

Welfare Reform Initiatives and Status in EDDs 7 and 9

Employment Opportunities

The Culpeper and Lynchburg regions have been very active in developing coordinated services to TANF recipients. The emphasis within both areas has been on job development and job placement. For example:

- The Culpeper, VA Chamber of Commerce surveyed local businesses to prepare the local department of social services on the types of characteristics and skills needed.
- Temporary employment agencies come one day a week to the Lynchburg Department of Social Services to interview TANF recipients. The temporary agencies assess the employability of clients, provide job interview instruction and role-playing, and provide job placement.
- The Family Resource Network in Fauquier, a partnership with the local department of social service, the Virginia Cooperative Extension, the faith community, and non-profit agencies developed an adult-to-adult mentoring model to meet individual family needs, including financial, parenting, and

employment issues.²

VIEW Enrollment and Employment.

Since implementation of VIEW, the Culpeper region has enrolled 512 participants in a work activity, for a total of 74 percent of TANF recipients being placed in a VIEW employment activity. Similarly, the Lynchburg region has enrolled 75 percent of its TANF recipients into a work activity, a total of 1,411 participants.³

In both the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions, 71 percent of the eligible VIEW participants found employment.⁴ These high employment rates have been duplicated throughout the state. Of the mandatory VIEW participants who did not find employment, most in Culpeper and Lynchburg regions worked in community work experience.⁵

Wages.

As of July 31, 1998, the average hourly wage earned by VIEW participants is \$5.75 in the Culpeper region and \$5.15 in the Lynchburg region. The wages in the Culpeper region are similar to the state average of \$5.78 per hour.⁶

In the Culpeper region the average hourly wage by VIEW participants in Rappahannock is a high \$6.44. However, the unavailability of full-time work and high job turnover in these part-time jobs keeps Rappahannock VIEW participants within the average monthly wage range for the region, at \$635 - \$818.⁷

Three months after hire, 73 percent of VIEW participants in both Culpeper and Lynchburg regions were still employed. Six months of employment was

² "Making Welfare Work: Virginia's Transformation from Dependency to Opportunity, FY 1997," report to the Office of the Governor and General Assembly by Sect. of Health and Human Resources. Dec. 15, 1997

³ Virginia Independence Program Monthly Report, Virginia Department of Social Services. August 17, 1998.

⁴ Virginia Independence Program Monthly Report, Virginia Department of Social Services. August 17, 1998.

⁵ Virginia Independence Program Monthly Report, Virginia Department of Social Services. August 17, 1998.

⁶ Virginia Independence Program Monthly Report, Virginia Department of Social Services. August 17, 1998.

⁷ Virginia Independence Program Monthly Report, Virginia Department of Social Services. August 17, 1998.

reached by only about half of the participants in Culpeper (56%) and Lynchburg (54%.) These job retention rates are similar statewide⁸ and nationwide.⁹

Average earnings by VIEW participants in the two study regions are above poverty levels. The 1998 federal poverty level for the 48 contiguous states is \$671 monthly for the first person, \$233 for each additional person in the family.¹⁰ However, a VIEW participant in a two-person family earning average wages would earn above poverty levels in only half of the localities studied. Average earnings are \$949 in the Culpeper region and \$791 in the Lynchburg region, while poverty levels are \$903 for a two-person family and \$1,136 for a three-person family.

Child Day Care

With the increased employment opportunities, the childcare industry in the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions has flourished. In comparison to a statewide growth of 29 percent during the last three years, the Lynchburg region saw a 37 percent increase in children attending day care while Culpeper realized a 60 percent increase. The largest increases were in Fauquier, where 88 percent more children attended child care, and in Bedford city, with more than double the number of children in child care during 1998 than in 1995.

Tables 3 and 4 exemplify how well these communities are responding to the increase of parents working. While the number and capacity in unlicensed childcare situations is unknown, data from licensed childcare centers is very revealing about the economics of the area. In only three years, the Culpeper region built six more day care centers and the Lynchburg region built eight more centers. The new day care centers allowed for over 30 percent more children to attend day care, an increase that doubles the state average. During the same time period, the Culpeper region developed three more license-exempt childcare centers in churches and the Lynchburg region developed an additional seven.

Perhaps most telling, though, is the increase of family home providers. Because family home providers are used primarily for the care of toddlers and infants, an increase in family home providers suggests more parents of young children are entering the workforce. In contrast to day care centers, family home providers are also more likely to have extended hours and holiday/weekend schedules, essential for shift workers. As demonstrated in Table 4, the number of children attending licensed family care providers during the three-year period quadrupled. A total of 46 more licensed family home providers cared for children during 1998 in the two regions.

⁸ Virginia Independence Program Monthly Report, Virginia Department of Social Services. August 17, 1998.

⁹ Findings by the Children Defense Fund and the Institute of Women's Poverty Research, footnotes 3 and 4.

¹⁰ Federal Register, volume 63, no. 36. February 24, 1998, pp. 9235-9238.

Table 3

Licensed Child Day Care 1995 - 1998

	Licensed Day Care Centers			Capacity in Licensed Day Care Centers			Licensed Family Home Providers			Capacity in Licensed Family Home Providers		
	1995	1998	Difference	1995	1998	Difference	1995	1998	Difference	1995	1998	Difference
EDD 7												
Culpeper	8	10	2	894	1,115	25%	9	14	5	60	148	147%
Fauquier	20	24	4	1,042	1,412	36%	7	19	12	25	178	612%
Madison	4	2	(2)	177	187	6%	0	1	1	0	12	-
Orange	7	11	4	390	552	42%	1	6	5	12	54	350%
Rappahannock	2	2	0	110	140	27%	0	1	1	0	12	-
TOTAL	41	49	8	2,613	3,406	30%	17	41	24	97	404	316%
EDD 9												
Amherst	9	11	2	394	456	16%	1	2	1	12	24	100%
Appomattox	3	4	1	133	225	69%	2	2	0	24	24	0%
Bedford County	11	11	0	561	541	-4%	1	5	4	12	60	400%
Campbell	14	14	0	1,082	1,282	18%	1	3	2	12	32	167%
Bedford	2	2	0	154	354	130%	1	0	(1)	12	0	-100%
Lynchburg	19	22	3	1,295	1,878	45%	0	16	16	0	171	-
TOTAL	58	64	6	3,619	4,736	31%	6	28	22	72	311	332%
Statewide	2,132	2,396	211	154,379	176,897	15%	931	1,948	1,017	8,724	19,742	126%

Table 4

License-Exempt and Total Child Day Care 1995 - 1998

	Church-Exempt Centers			Capacity in Church-Exempt Centers			Total Day Care Capacity		
	<u>1995</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>Difference</u>
EDD 7									
Culpeper	5	5	0	260	470	81%	1,214	1,733	43%
Fauquier	11	14	3	225	837	272%	1,292	2,427	88%
Madison	0	0	0	0	0	0	177	199	12%
Orange	1	1	0	0	53	0	402	606	51%
Rappahannock	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>152</u>	<u>38%</u>
TOTAL	17	20	3	485	1,360	180%	3,195	5,117	60%
EDD 9									
Amherst	2	2	0	75	100	33%	481	580	21%
Appomattox	3	3	0	114	108	-5%	271	357	32%
Bedford County	2	3	1	180	200	11%	753	801	6%
Campbell	2	2	0	164	116	-29%	1,258	1,430	14%
Bedford	1	2	1	49	81	65%	215	435	102%
Lynchburg	<u>19</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1,448</u>	<u>1,714</u>	<u>18%</u>	<u>2,743</u>	<u>3,763</u>	<u>37%</u>
TOTAL	29	36	7	2,030	2,319	14%	5,721	7,366	29%
Statewide	629	770	141	31,131	46,213	48%	194,234	242,852	25%

Transportation

Table 5 reveals that over half of the workers in the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions have workplaces in different localities than their homes. Residents of Campbell county often work in Lynchburg city, and Bedford county residents often work in the city of Bedford.

Little public transportation is available or used. In Virginia cities, public transportation is common, but workers in the rest of the state primarily rely on their own vehicles. Less than one percent of the county residents in the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions utilize public transportation and the majority of residents drive alone to work. Residents throughout Virginia are currently less likely to use public transportation or carpool than in 1980.¹¹

These findings have particular importance to VIEW participants. As rural entry-level jobs are scarce, transportation to suburban and urban employers is critical.

The localities in EDDs 7 and 9 have been innovative in working out transportation solutions for VIEW participants. Culpeper and Madison Counties have arrangements with their school boards to allow recipients to ride buses with their children to schools. Orange County has developed a program for clients with access to cars that provides vouchers to purchase gas. Culpeper County has purchased state surplus vehicles to augment their transportation resources. In Lynchburg, the Family Loan Program provides loans for the purchase of cars.

¹¹ Virginia Statistical Abstract 1996-1997. Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia, 1996.

Table 5

Transportation

	Percent of Persons Working Outside Residence Locality	Mode of Transportation to Work			Average Time Driving to Work (In Minutes)	% Who Drive At Least 45 minutes To Work
		Car	Public Transportation	Other		
EDD 7						
Culpeper	42%	72%	1.2%	27%	28	25%
Fauquier	51%	74%	0.5%	26%	33	32%
Madison	56%	67%	0.3%	33%	23	15%
Orange	46%	73%	0.8%	26%	27	19%
Rappahannock	61%	67%	0.6%	33%	35	35%
EDD 9						
Amherst	55%	78%	0.7%	21%	21	8%
Appomattox	45%	73%	0.0%	27%	22	1%
Bedford County	82%	80%	0.1%	20%	24	12%
Campbell	56%	81%	0.2%	19%	20	5%
Bedford	37%	78%	0.4%	21%	18	11%
Lynchburg	18%	75%	3.5%	22%	15	3%
Statewide	48%	75%	0.4%	24%		

Source: 1990 Census

Training and Education

Table 6 shows that the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions offer vocational training, community colleges, and universities, but they are concentrated in the more densely populated areas of Lynchburg, Fauquier, and Culpeper. Lynchburg is home to three colleges—Liberty University, Lynchburg College, and Randolph-Macon, as well as two community colleges.

As one indicator of successful self-sufficiency is a high school education, the dropout rates were examined in the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions. Table 6 indicates that the dropout rates are low in the Lynchburg area, yet surprisingly higher in the northern Virginia counties of Madison, Fauquier, and Orange. Statewide, only 3.3 percent drop out of school. The dropout rate is decreasing slightly both in the state and in the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions.

Table 6

Education

	<u>Dropout Rates</u>		<u>Community Colleges</u>	<u>Colleges/ Universities</u>
	<u>91-92</u>	<u>95-96</u>		
EDD 7				
Culpeper	4.0%	2.5%	1	
Fauquier	2.8%	3.3%	2	
Madison	3.0%	4.4%		
Orange	5.0%	4.4%		
Rappahannock	1.8%	0.0%	1	
EDD 9				
Amherst	3.2%	3.1%		1
Appomattox	2.2%	1.9%		
Bedford County	0.9%	1.7%		
Campbell	2.7%	2.8%		
Bedford				
Lynchburg	3.3%	2.3%	2	3
Statewide	3.4%	3.3%		

Health Care

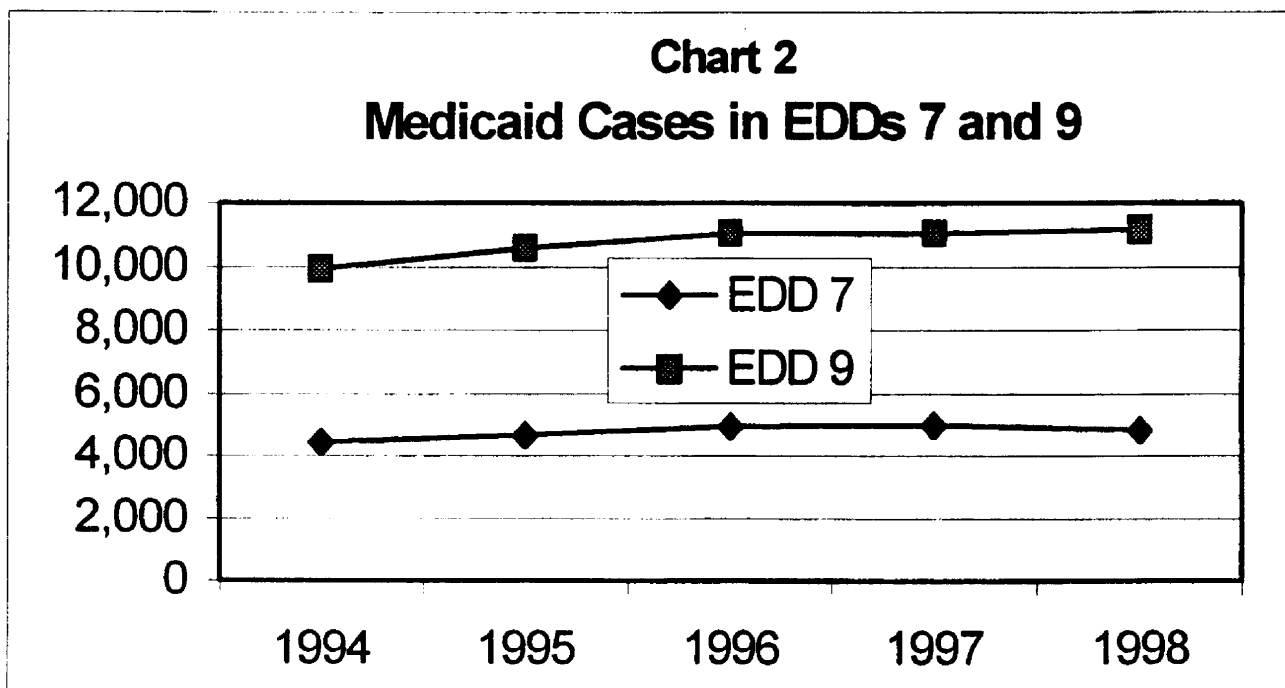
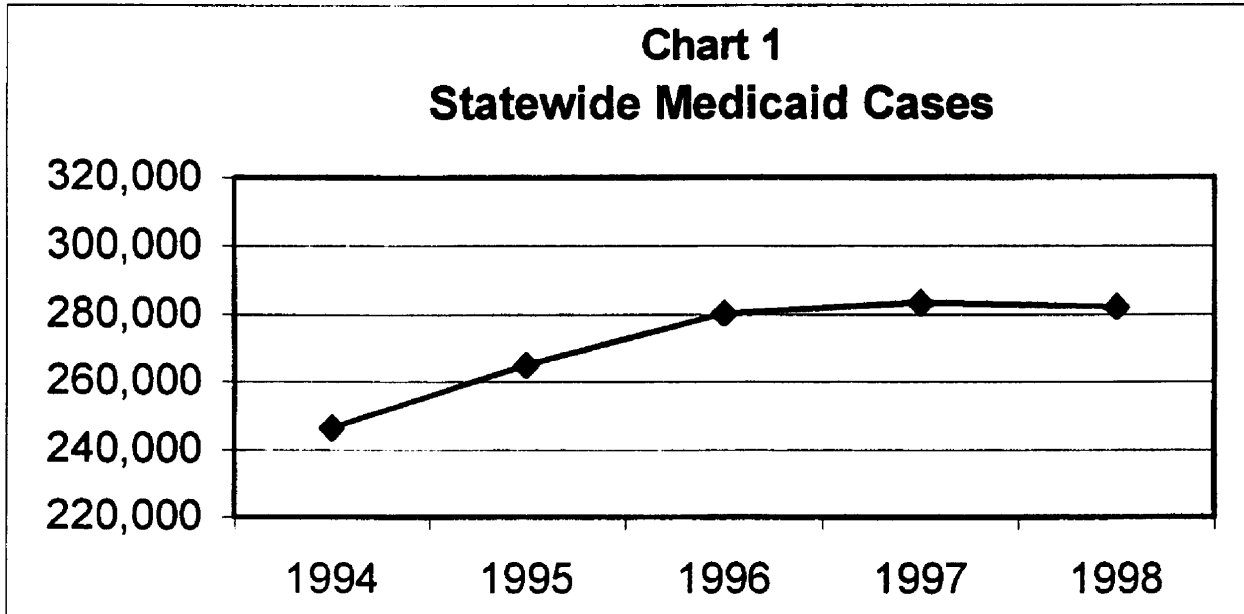
In Virginia, less than 13 percent of all residents are without health insurance. However, those without health insurance are more likely to earn less than poverty levels. In 1997, there were 111,000 Virginians who lived at or below 200% of the poverty level, nearly seven percent of the Virginia population.¹²

The lack of health insurance and the moving of welfare recipients into employment, however, has not expanded the number of Medicaid cases. In Virginia, Medicaid cases increased steadily prior to welfare reform initiatives and then started to plateau. In the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions, though, Medicaid cases have continued at basically the same pre-reform level. See charts 1 and 2 for Medicaid case trends.

On October 25, 1998, the Children's Medical Security Insurance Plan Program was implemented in Virginia. This program provides medical insurance coverage to

¹² "Low Income Uninsured Children by State." U.S. Census Bureau. www.census.gov/hhes/hlthins/lowinckid.html

children under 19 years of age that are not eligible for Medicaid, have no health insurance, and whose family income is less than 185% of the federal poverty limit.



Other Initiatives

In addition to providing assistance finding and maintaining employment, the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions are invested in assuring long-term self-sufficiency for low income families. For example, workers in Culpeper make a point of informing recipients about the Earned Income Tax Credit, while most workers in other states do not provide this information.¹³ As a result of the comprehensive services, information, and referral to community resources, TANF recipients in these two regions are well-equipped to provide economic support to their families.

Conclusions

The early successes of EDDs 7 and 9 are continuing, as welfare reciprocity continues to decline. The dramatic decreases in welfare dependency are being duplicated throughout the state. Part of the reason for the initial successes is due to the coordinated efforts within both the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions to equip low-income families with the information, job skills, resources, services, and motivation to maintain employment.

While transportation and health insurance remain serious issues in these two regions, the extent of the problem was not as pervasive as expected. Medicaid cases have not increased and communities have developed creative approaches to transportation needs.

Additional study is currently underway by Mathematica, a consulting firm that is providing third-party welfare reform evaluation. Preliminary findings in the Culpeper and Lynchburg regions suggest, though, that welfare reform is enhancing low-income families' abilities to maintain self-sufficiency.

¹³ "Building an Employment Focused Welfare System: Work First and Other Work-Oriented Strategies in Five States," Urban Institute. June 1998.

Appendix I

Senate Joint Resolution 356

Senate Joint Resolution No. 356

Requesting the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, with the assistance of the Advisory Commission on Welfare Reform, to study methods to ensure the continued success of Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) clients as they work toward self-sufficiency.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 17, 1997

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 13, 1997

WHEREAS, quarterly implementation of the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) began in Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock Counties on July 1, 1995, and in Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell Counties and the cities of Bedford and Lynchburg on October 1, 1995, and has continued in other regions of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, because of encouraging early results and the requirements of national welfare reform, statewide implementation of the VIEW program has been accelerated and will be complete by October 1, 1997; and

WHEREAS, by the end of the 1996 fiscal year, declines in welfare caseloads had saved \$24 million in state and federal funds and 69 percent of VIEW participants required to be in a work activity had earned \$2.7 million in addition to AFDC benefits; and

WHEREAS, much of the initial success of the VIEW program has been due to the cooperation of local businesses, chambers of commerce, local social services agencies, Private Industry Councils, and church groups that have provided jobs, helped with transportation, and volunteered their time; and

WHEREAS, VIEW participants in the first group of localities to implement the VIEW program will begin to relinquish cash assistance benefits in July of 1997 and one year later these individuals may not be able to rely on previously provided support services such as Medicaid, day care, transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth wants to encourage efforts in cooperation with the private sector to help individuals complete successfully the transition to self-sufficiency, to help families maintain and improve their new independent economic status, and to preserve the vitality of communities; now, therefore; be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, with the assistance of the Advisory Commission on Welfare Reform, be requested to study methods to ensure the continued success of Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) clients as they work toward self-sufficiency. In conducting the study, the Secretary shall include, but not be

limited to, expanding employment opportunities, increasing the availability and accessibility of quality child day care and transportation assistance, expanding training and education opportunities, and examining health care availability. The Secretary shall also study specific topics referred to it by the 1997 Session of the General Assembly, including Senate Joint Resolution No. 346 on welfare fraud and Senate Joint Resolution No. 303 on drug testing of recipients of cash assistance to needy families in Virginia.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources for this study, upon request.

The Secretary shall complete his work in time to submit his initial findings and recommendations by November 15, 1997, to the Governor and the 1998 Session of the General Assembly, and his subsequent findings and recommendations by November 15, 1998, to the Governor and the 1999 Session of the General Assembly, as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

