

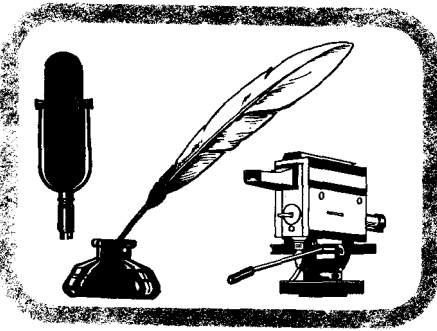
The original documents are located in Box D9, folder “Ford Press Releases - Welfare, 1972-1973” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--

March 24, 1972

The Welfare Rights Organization is engaging in an irresponsible act in using the school children of the District of Columbia as political pawns. The WRO is exploiting D.C. school children as a part of the political games it is playing to promote ridiculously high welfare payments. If WRO really were concerned about the welfare of children, it would not expose them to possible injury by herding them together for a mass march. I believe that in the interests of the health and safety of D.C. school children, Mayor Walter Washington should revoke the permit for Saturday's so-called "Children's March for Survival." I would add that D.C. school officials and those D.C. School Board members lending themselves to this ridiculous political exercise are to be condemned for allowing the schools to be used in this propaganda maneuver.

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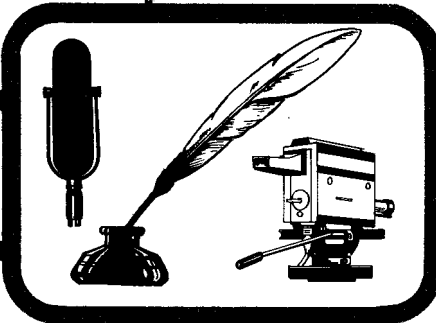
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**CONGRESSMAN
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HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

**NEWS
RELEASE**

THURSDAY 11

FOR RELEASE AT 12 NOON ~~WEDNESDAY~~, JAN. 10, 1973, AND THEREAFTER

Rep. Gerald R. Ford today introduced a bill aimed at ending welfare cheating which deprives merchants of payment for their wares.

The Ford bill is directed at welfare recipients who buy a needed appliance, such as a stove or refrigerator, but don't pay for it with the welfare funds they are given for that purpose.

Ford said his bill would allow a state, in its discretion, to use the dual signature method of making welfare payments to families with dependent children. This "restricted" or vendor payment insures that the money owed the merchant will be paid, Ford said.

At present, a State can employ the dual signature method of disbursing welfare funds but only where the welfare recipient has demonstrated an inability to manage money. Also, the dual signature practice must be limited to 10 per cent of the entire welfare load.

The Ford bill would provide clear-cut Federal authority for State discretion in the use of vendor payments. This would eliminate any possibility that the State would lose Federal matching funds.

"This legislation is important in terms of justice to the merchant and improved operation of our welfare system, which is badly in need of reform," Ford said.

"We shouldn't have any cheating in the welfare system," he continued. "When the public sees welfare cheating, even if it is practiced by only a few, the public loses faith in the entire system and gets the impression that everyone on welfare cheats. My bill would improve matters for everyone concerned -- those on welfare, the merchant, and the public-at-large."

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CONGRESSMAN
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HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

For Release Thursday, Jan. 18, 1973

Rep. Gerald R. Ford Thursday reintroduced his "runaway pappy" bill, a piece of legislation aimed at fathers who have fled to other states to escape paying child support.

The Ford bill would make child support orders enforceable in Federal courts. It would bring Federal authority to bear on the problem of non-support by husbands and fathers who shirk their parental responsibilities.

Ford said passage of his bill would give legal sanction to the moral and social obligations every husband has to take care of his family.

"The main purpose of the bill," Ford said, "is to try to deter a man from leaving a state to avoid paying for child support under an order obtained against him."

The Ford bill grants jurisdiction to Federal officials to act in those cases where a man flees from one state to another to evade his obligations under a divorce decree or child support order issued by a state court. The bill makes it a crime for a man to move out of the state to avoid obeying the state court order.

The states cannot get uniform state action on this matter, and the cost of extradition from one state to another is too great for a state or local government, Ford said.

Ford stated: "We need the help of the Federal government to get at husbands and fathers who refuse to support their children and flee to another state to escape their responsibilities. I think we should throw the forces of the Federal government into pursuit of fathers who run off and leave their families with no means of support. A man who abandons his children is just as much a felon as the man who steals an automobile."

Under the proposed Federal law, nonsupport cases would be heard by Federal courts in the state where the fugitive father is residing at the time. He would be given the option of supporting his children or going to jail. It would not be necessary to return the man to the state where the nonsupport or desertion charges had been brought.

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CONGRESSMAN
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HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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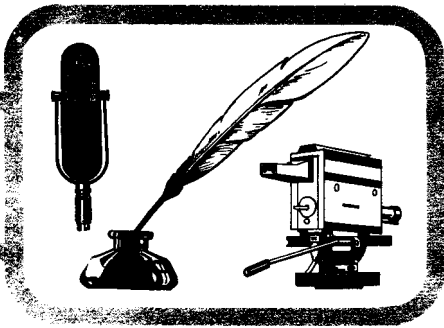
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CONGRESSMAN
GERALD R. FORD
HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADER

**NEWS
RELEASE**

--FOR RELEASE AT 12 NOON FRIDAY--
February 9, 1973

Note to Correspondents: Please see attached letter to HEW Secretary Caspar Weinberger.

Rep. Gerald R. Ford today urged HEW Secretary Caspar Weinberger to order an HEW policy change which would enable states to wipe out welfare cheating.

Ford asked Weinberger to allow states discretionary use of the dual payee system of making payments to welfare recipients--the requirement that payment for specific goods, services or items be in the form of checks which are drawn jointly to the order of the recipient and the person furnishing the goods, services or items and negotiable only upon endorsement by both such recipient and such person.

The need for such restrictive payments is made clear by a study conducted in Genesee County, Michigan by the Michigan Department of Social Services and the Genesee County Dental Society, Ford said.

This study showed that in cases where dental work was performed on welfare recipients, only 50 per cent of the money sent to those recipients for payment of their dental bills was actually used for that purpose.

R. Bernard Houston, director of the Michigan Department of Social Services, has informed Ford: "The conclusion (of those making the Genesee County study) was that if public accountability and recipients' dental and optometric needs were of any concern, the need for change in the payment system was scarcely arguable."

Payment for needed services to welfare recipients is part of their cash grant in Michigan.

In a letter to Ford, Houston said: "This worked fairly well for a while, but as caseloads increased abuse increased. To be specific, many recipients received payment for authorized service and never returned to receive the service, or if received, did not pay for it. The incidence of this abuse reached such proportions that many individual doctors and, in some instances, county professional societies refused further service to welfare recipients."

Ford has introduced a bill, H.R. 1750, which would give the states discretionary power to use the dual payee system as much as they wish without losing Federal welfare payments.

HEW restricts use of the dual payee system to 10 per cent of the welfare caseload and then only to cases where the recipient has demonstrated inability to manage money.

Ford said he would be delighted to see Weinberger order the policy change, making his dual payee bill unnecessary.

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Congress of the United States
Office of the Minority Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 7, 1973

The Honorable Caspar Weinberger
Secretary
Department of Health, Education
and Welfare
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing you with regard to welfare cheating--the failure of persons on welfare to pay for items or services with funds provided them for that purpose.

The remedy for such cheating is the dual payee system--the requirement that payment for specific goods, services or items be in the form of checks which are drawn jointly to the order of the recipient and the persons furnishing the goods, services or other items and negotiable only upon endorsement by both such recipient and such person.

This would apply, for instance, to the payment of rent, payments for dental and optometric services, and the purchase of such appliances as a refrigerator.

Michigan has sought to use this dual signature method of assuring payment for services and goods provided to welfare recipients since February 1971. But HEW has consistently maintained that the dual signature method can only be used where welfare recipients have demonstrated inability to manage money--and even then it must be restricted to 10 per cent of the welfare caseload.

R. Bernard Houston, director of the Michigan Department of Social Services, maintains that the policy being pursued by HEW is unrealistic--and I agree.

I have introduced legislation (H.R. 1750) which would allow a State discretionary use of the dual signature method in cases involving aid to dependent children. States would be permitted to use the dual signature method broadly without risking loss of Federal welfare payments.

The Honorable Caspar Weinberger
February 7, 1973
Page 2

However, Mr. Houston believes that HEW can remedy the present situation simply through a change in regulations.

I therefore urge that you, as Secretary of HEW, order a change in policy to allow states to use the dual signature method without loss of Federal assistance. Even if it were possible to gain enactment of H.R. 1750 in a relatively short time, I would be glad to see the objective accomplished through departmental regulation.

I hope I may have a reply from you in the near future.

Best regards,

/s/ Jerry Ford

Gerald R. Ford, M.C.

GRF:pc