

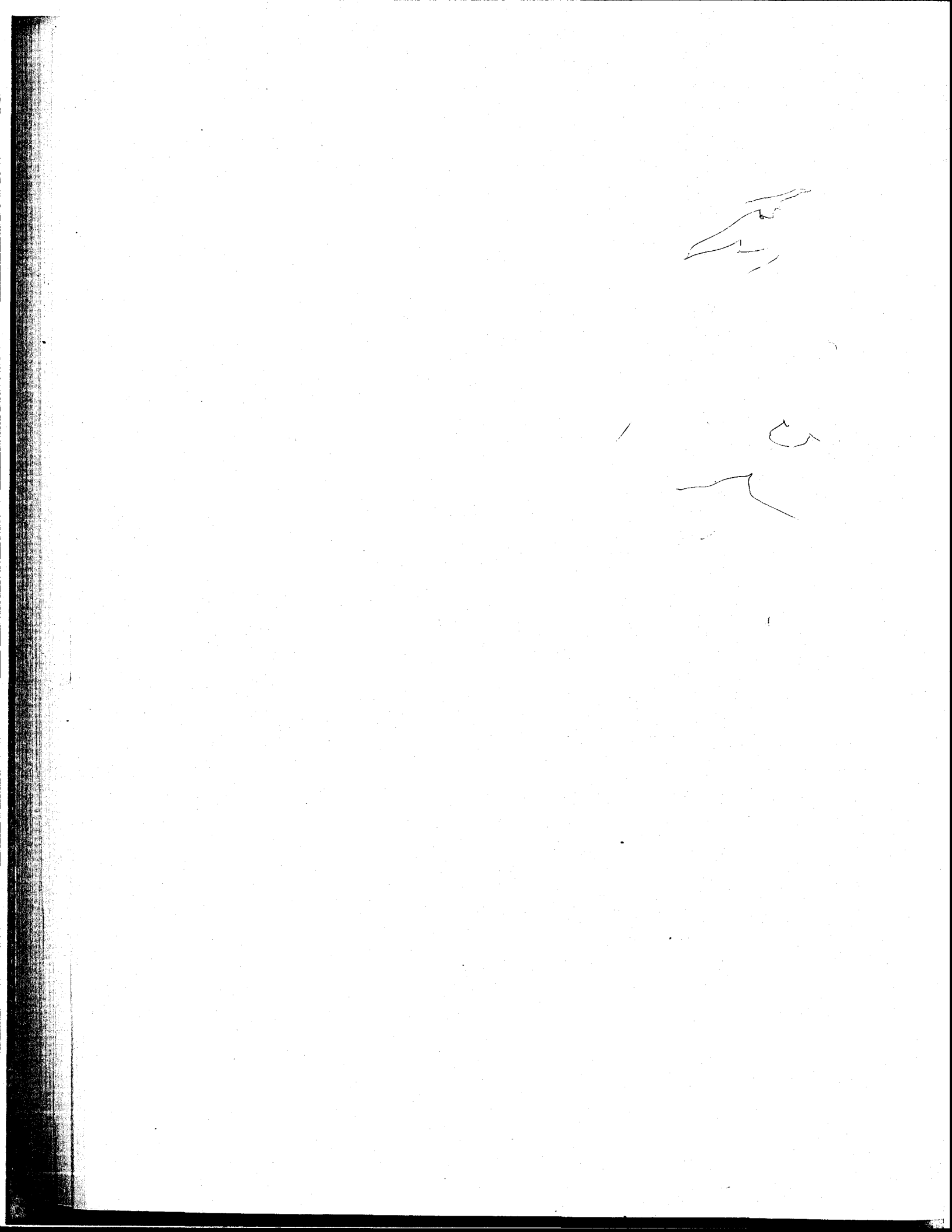
Report No. 8

REPORT ON
THE TRAINING AND WORK OPPORTUNITIES OF
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS

North Carolina
Legislative Research Commission

Raleigh

1967



Introduction

The Commission was directed by an unnumbered House Resolution, adopted on June 15, 1965, to make a thorough study of "public assistance programs with a view to providing training programs for trainable recipients and requiring maximum efforts to obtain employment by employable persons, to the end that recipients capable of regaining financial independence will be encouraged to do so," and to report its findings and recommendations to the 1967 General Assembly. This resolution refers to Illinois legislation providing a program for education and employment of public assistance recipients.

Findings

North Carolina has three basic public assistance programs for which eligibility is defined by the Social Security Act and implementing North Carolina law. They are (1) Old Age Assistance (OAA)--for needy persons 65 years of age or older; (2) Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled (APTD)--for needy persons who are classified medically as permanently and totally disabled; (3) Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)--financial assistance to needy children who have been deprived of parental support through absence or medical incapacity of a parent.

There is considerable confusion about who receives public assistance in North Carolina. There are no employable or trainable persons in the first two categories above--the aged and the disabled. The only public assistance recipients who might be able to use job training are parents who receive AFDC. Most adult recipients in this category are women who have several small children. In most cases, the father of the children is deceased or out of the home. In the few cases where the father is living in the home, he is medically disabled. Thus, as a practical matter, most of these mothers are needed in their homes to provide care for their children,

If they secured employment outside their homes, few of these women have sufficient education to earn enough income to provide adequate child care services.

If a parent in a AFDC case is not needed in the home to provide child care, he or she is now required to seek employment. In the administration of the North Carolina program, our county welfare departments work with the Employment Security Commission and other community resources to refer such persons for job training and employment opportunities.

Thus in North Carolina, AFDC is not provided to needy families where both parents are living in the home or where neither parent is incapacitated. Therefore, if an able-bodied father of a large family becomes unemployed, his children are not eligible for AFDC. Indeed, for such a family to become eligible, the able-bodied father must desert his family. In some cases, fathers have been known to desert for economic reasons--to be certain that their children would be fed.

There is legal authority under federal law for parents who are living together to be eligible for AFDC if the father is unemployed and thus unable to provide support for the children. It is known as AFDC-UP (the UP referring to unemployed parent). Under federal law, an unemployed father could receive AFDC temporarily while he is receiving job training to enable him to move back into the labor market. Thus, it would not be necessary for him to desert his family in order for them to be eligible for public assistance.

There are presently three experimental programs in North Carolina under the AFDC-UP program--in Craven, Foreyth and Orange counties. This program is being financed with federal funds under Title V of the Economic

Opportunity Act. If these programs prove successful, North Carolina may wish to adopt legislation which would implement this program on a state-wide basis.

We therefore conclude that the Illinois program for training and employment of public assistance recipients would not be applicable in North Carolina, for we have only a few AFDC recipients who are actually employable or trainable. In addition, we find that the North Carolina Department of Public Welfare and county welfare departments are doing a fine job under present law and existing policy to secure employment and job training for those recipients who can use such services. We do commend our State Department of Public Welfare and the county welfare departments for the excellent job they are now doing.

Recommendation

On the basis of the above discussion and findings, we make no recommendation for change in existing law or policy.

Appendix A

HOUSE RESOLUTION

A HOUSE RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION TO STUDY TRAINING AND WORK OPPORTUNITIES OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS.

WHEREAS, other states in the administration of public assistance welfare programs have made provision for the education and employment of public assistance recipients capable of training and employment; and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois in particular has by legislation provided a program for education and employment of public assistance recipients:
NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

Section 1. The Legislative Research Commission is hereby authorized and directed to make a thorough study of public assistance programs with a view to providing training programs for trainable recipients and requiring maximum efforts to obtain employment by employable persons, to the end that recipients capable of regaining financial independence will be encouraged to do so. The Commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the 1967 Session of the General Assembly.

Sec. 2. This Resolution shall become effective upon its adoption.

[Adopted by the House of Representatives June 15, 1965.]