

NC Asset Building Policy Task Force: Lessons Learned

Presentation for the Pathways to Wealth:
Financial Education and Asset Building Conference

October 8, 2007

Overview

- Why a NC Asset Building Policy Task Force?
- Convenors/Co-chairs
 - EITC Carolinas, an initiative of MDC Inc.
www.eitc-carolinas.org
 - IDA and Asset Building Collaborative of NC
www.ncidacollaborative.org
- Timeline:
 - Discussion began following 2005 Conference
 - First invitation sent on May 23, 2006
 - First meeting held on June 14, 2006

Purpose

1. To develop a common framework that can tie diverse asset building policy pieces together;
2. To give these efforts greater visibility on a local, statewide, and national level; and
3. To strengthen our mutual efforts to see new or expanded asset building policies and program initiatives implemented.

Goals

- Identify state policies to support asset building among low and moderate-income families
- Prioritize policy initiatives that have promise of implementation
- Learn more about each others' work and issues

Goals (continued)

- Write a report on state asset building policies issued by the Task Force
- Undertake education and outreach using report as a framework
- Identify useful program models in addition to policy
- Design and implement demonstration projects

Framework

- ***Earn It (Asset Accumulation):***
 - Policies that enhance the ability of families to earn an adequate level of income and benefits to allow them to save and build assets;
- ***Keep It (Asset Preservation):***
 - Policies that help consumers to preserve and protect assets; and
- ***Make It Grow (Asset Leveraging):***
 - Policies that help families to invest and grow their assets over time.

Funding and Technical Assistance

- Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation
- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities
- CFED
- Center for Social Development, Washington University in St. Louis
- Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

Participating Organizations

Types of Agencies

Nonprofit & Community-Based Organizations

Research Institutions & Think Tanks

State Departments & Agencies

Advocacy Groups

Community Development Financial Institutions

A complete list of participating organizations is available; see handout for details

Structure

- General Members & Executive Committee
- Support Staff
- Subcommittees
 - *Earn It* (Asset Accumulation)
 - *Keep It* (Asset Preservation)
 - *Make It Grow* (Asset Leveraging)
 - Research

Sample Policy Recommendation

- Increase the level of support to working families provided by the NC Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) by:
 - a) increasing the percentage of the federal EITC that would be provided by the state EITC, for example, from the current rate of 3.5% in 2008 to 5% in 2010 and 7.5% in 2012; and
 - b) making the NC EITC a permanent provision of the NC tax code

Successes

- Supportive environment for the project
 - Active agencies and coalitions, strong predatory lending laws, involved research institutions
- Consistent meetings and steady participation
 - Quarterly basis (6 times since June 2006)
 - Learning portion and updates on Task Force work
- Developed a list of priority areas

Challenges

- Task Force Formation
 - Disadvantages of not being a working group prior to applying for funding
 - Balancing the time of paid staff vs. general members
- Communication
 - Explaining asset building and the purpose of the group
 - Lack of branding (e.g., logo, motto)
 - Print/electronic materials (e.g., fact sheets, newsletters)

Challenges (continued)

- Time Constraints:
 - Time needed to brainstorm ideas, agree on policy recommendations, and complete report
- Ongoing Outreach:
 - Government officials, for-profit groups (e.g., financial institutions), grassroots organizations, minority populations, rural communities, and low and moderate income constituencies

State Resources

- **Arkansas:** www.arassetpolicy.org
- **California:** www.assetpolicy-ca.org
- **Illinois:** www.illinoisassetbuilding.org
- **Michigan:** www.cedam.info/ABC.htm
- **Pennsylvania:** www.moneysbestfriend.com
- **Texas:** www.covenantcapital.org

National Resources

- **Center for Social Development**
<http://gwbweb.wustl.edu/csd/policy>
- **CFED**
www.cfed.org
- **Institute on Assets and Social Policy**
<http://iasp.brandeis.edu>
- **New America Foundation**
www.newamerica.net

Contact Information

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