

**Wally
Herger**
Congressman

2nd District - California



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 8, 2006

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Herger Attends White House Signing Ceremony for Enactment of Welfare Measure

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) - Today, Congressman Herger visited the White House for the signing ceremony of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, which includes a measure reauthorizing and expanding the successful welfare reforms of 1996. Herger, as chairman of the House Ways and Means subcommittee that has jurisdiction over welfare and other issues, has worked to shepherd the welfare reform legislation through Congress. He had the following reaction to President Bush signing this measure into law:

"Today's signing of the Deficit Reduction Act represents the culmination of literally years of effort, supported by the President, to strengthen the successful welfare reforms of 1996," Herger stated. "The 1996 reforms focused on promoting work, which has lifted families and children out of poverty and reduced dependence on government dramatically. Still, two million families remain dependent on welfare, and more than half of the parents on welfare perform not even a single hour of work or training for their checks. That's why for the past four years, Congress has tried to pass changes to help more parents on welfare go to work and otherwise strengthen families. Now, with the President's signature of the Deficit Reduction Act, those changes are set to take effect."

Herger continued, "I am particularly pleased that the law includes a new, voluntary program to promote healthy marriages and responsible fatherhood. Children born and raised outside of marriage are seven times more likely to live in poverty than children raised by married couples, and more likely to fail in school, abuse drugs and to end up on welfare as adults. This new initiative will ensure that strong marriages and stable families are an important goal of national welfare policy, and a critical component of our efforts to reduce poverty and dependence through work," concluded Herger.

The welfare and related programs authorized by the 1996 law expired at the end of 2002, and despite passage by the House in 2002 and 2003 of long term reauthorization measures, the Senate did not act. As a result, Congress passed 12 temporary extensions of the law. Today's action reauthorizes welfare and related programs through 2010.

To view a picture of today's event, please go to http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/02/images/20060208-8_d-0292-2-515h.html on the Internet.

For more information, log on to <http://www.house.gov/herger> on the Internet!