The Wisconsin TANF program was sued in 2010 by Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc., the American Civil Liberties of Wisconsin, and the Milwaukee branch of the NAACP, on the grounds of discrimination on the basis of race and disability in the administration of the W-2 program. A study found that there were significant racial disparities in sanction rates for alleged failures to comply with program requirements. Both Latino and African-American program participants were sanctioned at a higher rate than white program participants. The settlement of the lawsuit required administrators of the W-2 program to ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities receive reasonable accommodations, which may include job training and supports for a longer time period than what is typically afforded, sign language interpreters, or in-depth services from the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).

TIME LIMITS

There was no time limit on AFDC, but the Personal Responsibility Act set a lifetime time limit of five years in which people could receive assistance. Some states set shorter time limits than the federal limit. States are free to set no time limit at all if they want to pay for the program out of state funds after the federal time limit is up, and Maine did that. The law does not require that assistance be in the form of cash. It can be in the form of vouchers. Some states even turned over the program to counties (Edelman, 1997).

WORKFARE

After two months of being on welfare, recipients are required to find a community service job if they have not found paid employment. Community service work is usually menial work, such as raking leaves, picking up garbage, or washing dishes in a school cafeteria. In some cities, workfare workers have replaced regular workers. Although the law prohibits the direct substitution of welfare recipients for currently paid workers, some localities have circumvented this requirement by not renewing expired employment contracts with paid workers. In many localities, low-wage workers were displaced by workfare "trainees" working off their welfare benefits at less than the minimum wage—sometimes as little as $1.50 an hour (Cooper, 1997). In mid-1997 in Baltimore, 1,000 workers had lost jobs to welfare trainees, despite the fact that city workers had only two years before won a city ordinance guaranteeing a living wage to anyone employed under contracts with the city (Cooper, 1997).

The largest workfare scheme in the United States was the Work Experience Program (WEP) in New York City. Only 5 percent of WEP participants found jobs (Crisp, & Fletcher, 2008). Thousands of New York City workfare participants did the work once done by higher-paid city workers (Greenhouse, 1997). They were exposed to hazardous working conditions, including limited or no access to protective clothing, toilets, and drinking water. They sued the city and in August 1997, a state Supreme Court justice ruled that the city was obligated to provide these necessities (Greenhouse, 1997). In July 2001, the federal government sued the Giuliani administration in New York City, charging it with doing too little to protect women in workfare jobs from sexual and racial harassment by their supervisors. The Giuliani administration said that welfare recipients in the city's workfare program were not employees and had no legal right to protection from sexual discrimination or sexual harassment in the workplace (Greenhouse, 2001). Unions fought this discrimination, and workers won some rights given to regular employees.

Four *New York Times* reporters looked at the Work Experience Program (workfare) in New York City and found the following: Workfare didn't lead to full-time jobs (Finder, 1998), many participants took the place of full-time workers (Greenhouse, 1998), mothers faced acute lack of day care (Swarns, 1998), and tough workfare rules were used as a way to cut welfare rolls (Toy, 1998).

A study of workfare programs in the United States, Canada, and Australia, found that "there is little evidence that workfare increases the likelihood of finding work. It can even increase unemployment by limiting the time available for job search and by failing to provide the skills and experience valued by employers. Workfare is least effective in getting people into jobs in weak labour markets where unemployment is high" (Crisp, & Fletcher, 2008).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Prior to the 1996 legislation, states were able to allow activities that helped prepare people for work, such as job training, education, or rehabilitation in substance abuse programs or disabilities. However, the 1996 legislation has a much narrower definition of what constitutes work-related activities. Only a year of education and training is allowed, and it must be directly related to a specific job that does not require a bachelor's or an advanced degree. States could allow more education if they paid for it out of state funds. Maine used state funds in its "Parents as Scholars" program to support some TANF recipients in four-year college programs.*

No more than 30 percent of a state's recipients can be in education and training. Outside this 30 percent, mothers could still undertake training, but only if they first worked or looked for work at least 20 hours a week.

During the 1996 welfare reform debate, the majority of policymakers treated work and education as if they were entirely different concepts. Senator Phil Gramm of Texas put it this way:

> Work does not mean sitting a classroom. Work means work. Any farm kid who rises before dawn for the daily chores can tell you that. Ask any of my brothers and sisters what "work" meant on our family's dairy farm. It didn't mean sitting on a stool in the barn, reading a book about how to milk a cow. "Work" meant milking cows. (Congressional Record, 1995)

*The Patsy Takemoto Mink Fellowship each year gives scholarships of $2,000 to assist low-income women to achieve an educational objective. The fellowship is named for the woman who represented her native Hawaii in the U.S. Congress. She fought against welfare reform in Congress. Her daughter Gwendolyn Mink, author of *Welfare's End*, established the fellowship, along with Patsy Mink's husband, to honor her deceased mother.

Gwendolyn Mink believes that welfare should go beyond helping low-income mothers care for their children. It should also open opportunities to education at all levels, and provide child care as well as assistance in overcoming personal barriers to employment. Mink explained that the Fellowship is a small nonprofit and reaches only a handful of women a year. The Foundation can be reached at http://www.patsyminkfoundation.org/.