

# News Release

Clarence H. Carter, Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 31, 2013**

**MEDIA CONTACT**  
**Tasya Peterson**  
**602-542-4296**

[TasyaPeterson@azdes.gov](mailto:TasyaPeterson@azdes.gov)

## **Director Clarence Carter testifies before U.S. Congressional Committee**

*Carter presents information about DES Transformation to House Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) Director Clarence H. Carter testified today before the United States House of Representatives Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee. Carter gave his testimony during the subcommittee’s hearing on “Improving the Safety Net: Better Coordinating Today’s Maze of Benefits and Programs to Ensure Families Receive Real Help.”

“Human services leadership of the safety net at the state and local level has struggled for years to make incremental changes to the system we administer,” Director Carter told subcommittee members. “While better coordination of benefits and ensuring that families’ receive real help are important, I ask the question, to what end? There must be an objective beyond simple coordination and the receipt of benefits. Our ultimate objective must be, where possible, moving persons beyond the need that required them to seek public intervention in the first place.”

The focus of today’s hearing was to highlight how States have used flexibility to improve services for low-income families and individuals, and how current safety net programs can be better coordinated to provide more effective assistance to those in need. Director Carter, one of five leaders in the human services industry to present, was asked to speak on the DES Transformation, a new initiative to reinvent the Arizona safety net.

“It is our contention that a system focused on measurably increasing the functioning capacity of safety net users toward the goal of reducing their dependency is a better use of public safety net resources and ultimately benefits the persons served and our communities as a whole,” added Director Carter. “In Arizona, our solution is an ambitious effort to fundamentally reinvent the safety net by developing a new model that addresses the many flaws that hinder the current system.”

To test this new construct, the Department is expected to launch a Demonstration Project this fall in which 1,000 recipients of the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) will be recruited to receive the help of a Case Coordinator who will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the consumer’s needs and goals and coordinate services to meet those needs and goals. Ultimately, through case coordination, consumers will increase their capacity and reduce their dependency on public supports.

“It is our argument in Arizona and the nation overall, that it is not a lack of expenditures which is our challenge to an effective safety net; rather it is a lack of vision, a flawed operating construct and strategies,” Director Carter told the subcommittee. “We can tinker around the edges of this system all

we want. We will not have appreciable change in the systems that serve those in need of the safety net until we have the courage to admit that ‘this emperor has no clothes’ and the fortitude to do something about it.”

The Demonstration will complement existing DES reforms and strengthen operations by focusing on the overall needs of the individuals and families it serves.

A full transcript of Director Clarence Carter’s testimony, along with videos and other information on the DES Transformation are available on the [DES Transformation website](#).

###