

MINUTES

INTERAGENCY MIGRANT WORKER POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 23, 2004

The quarterly meeting of the Interagency Migrant Worker Policy Committee was held at 10:00 a.m. on March 23, 2004 at the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry. The Chairman, Commissioner C. Ray Davenport, who called the meeting to order, and the Policy Committee Administrator, Betty B. Jenkins, were present.

In attendance were the following:

Kenny Annis, MSFW Board Representative
Kim Lewis, Virginia Workers' Compensation
Perida Giles, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Jack Turner, Virginia Employment Commission
Maricel Quintana-Baker, Virginia Department of Business Assistance
Shannon Bramblett, Virginia Department of Education
Jeff Nelson, Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services
Michelle Castellow Rivera, Virginia Employment Commission
Don Boswell, Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
Denise Goode, Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services
Gary Hagy, Virginia Department of Health
Dolores Esser, Virginia Employment Commission
Rick Cagan, MSFW Board

Ms. Jenkins distributed the minutes of the December 9, 2003 Migrant Worker Policy Committee meeting and the October 29, 2003 MSFW Board meeting and other information.

Commissioner Davenport introduced Ms. Dolores Esser, Commissioner of the Virginia Employment Commission, and invited members to introduce themselves. He then requested a motion to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2003 meeting; Mr. Nelson moved the minutes be approved and Mr. Annis seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as presented.

Mr. Annis noted that two MSFW Board meetings, first scheduled for January 28 and rescheduled for February 18, were cancelled due to snowstorms. He stated that the Craig/Kennedy Bill is still pending in Congress.

Commissioner Davenport reported that the legislation transferring the MSFW Board and the Migrant Worker Policy Committee from the Department of Labor and Industry to the Virginia Employment Commission passed both the Senate and House and he expected the Governor to sign the legislation. He added that Commissioner Esser would assume the duties for both the Board and Policy Committee. To a question on the reason for the transfer, he responded that it was for financial reasons resulting from budget cuts and staff elimination. Commissioner Esser explained that the VEC has federal funds for

the migrant program and can support the Board and Policy Committee. Commissioner Davenport added that he fully supports the MSFW Board and the Policy Committee but the transfer was strictly due to financial reasons.

Mr. Annis discussed the Region II (Department of Labor, Philadelphia) Migrant Conference held in Ocean City, MD on March 11-13 and attended by representatives from Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania. He commended VEC for their attendance and added that the expertise of the VEC is superior to the other states in attendance. He reported that Jim Mooney of the Federal Wage and Hour Division spoke about more emphasis being placed on education rather than enforcement. Mr. Annis said that the Craig/Kennedy Bill, which is consensus legislation, far exceeds all other legislation at this time. Mr. Turner added that the legislation would give legal status to aliens who want to work in the U.S. Mr. Turner mentioned that Region II is stressing renewal and maintenance of relationships with other states and also that the conference helps to keep Virginia informed.

Commissioner Davenport stated that federal offices seem to be stressing education rather than enforcement in all fields but that a strong compliance/enforcement program is necessary.

Mr. Cagan referred to his letter, copied in the meeting package, to Secretary of Health and Human Services Jane Woods. The letter contained a recommendation by the Migrant Health Conference of November 2003 that a task force be formed on Medicaid Reciprocity and Portability as it relates to migrant families in Virginia. He stated he was concerned since the letter was sent two months ago and he had received no response, but he plans to follow up in order to have an answer by the April 7 MSFW Board meeting. Commissioner Davenport said he would be glad to help and added that the General Assembly has been the focus of most state offices since January.

Mr. Nelson distributed a copy of DMAS' Interpretation and Translation Services and reviewed the information for Committee members. Details included a Medicaid overview; requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Medicaid coverage options for interpretation and translation services; and DMAS current coverage of interpreter and translation services including DMAS Northern Virginia pilot project.

Dr. Quintana-Baker explained that while she worked for the American Institutes for Research in Washington, DC she wrote a study, Health Care Language Services, for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Minority Health, and would forward a copy to Ms. Jenkins for distribution to members.

It was discussed that Ms. Karen Speakman, Deputy Director of NCALL, would be attending the April 7 MSFW Board meeting.

Ms. Bramblett stated that the Department of Education now has received three federal grants which will be used to help children to work toward high school diplomas and to aid in other areas as well.

The next Interagency Migrant Worker Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for

10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, June 8, 2004.

The next MSFW Board Meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 7, 2004 in House Room 1, State Capitol.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.