

Mincome Briefing and Basic Income Design Options

Ronald S. Hikel

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Outline

- Background about Mincome
- What is Basic Income?
- Suggested actions to increase the probability of implementing a Basic Income program
- Questions and answers

Mincome Background

- Federal-Provincial controlled social science experiment lasting 5+ years
- Defined research program and organization including social scientists and data processing and payment specialists
- Three research components
 - Dispersed sample in Winnipeg
 - Dispersed sample in rural communities
 - Saturation site in Dauphin

Mincome Background (2)

- Dauphin site
 - All residents eligible for payments based on family size and income below specified minimum
 - Support payments varying with reported earned income is key to reducing financial insecurity
 - Increased income reduced support by only 50%
- Data warehoused and not analyzed for 30+ years
- *The Town With No Poverty*, Evelyn Forget

What is Basic Income?

My view:

- A government-run system capable of assuring that every resident of Maine has regular and sufficient income to meet at least the basic costs of a decent human existence.
- The overall program would be based on public law, largely financed by tax-based revenue, with delivery operations overseen by an agency accountable to the state government.

Suggested Approach

- Accept that political, financial and technical barriers exist
- Basic Income is not just an appealing concept
 - Implementation requires effective and efficient administration taking advantage of advance information processing technology
 - Heed lessons from failed attempts

Suggested Approach (2)

- Establish basic behavioral, financial and social development objectives to be achieved for the people of Maine
- Do not do another research project
 - Enough know already, time to move on
- Commission independent report to compile what is already known

Suggested Approach (3)

- Select a specific evidence-based core delivery and operational design for program
 - Select a strong project leader, known and trusted
 - Public-private collaboration on payments system
 - Independent advisory/oversight body
- Place primary design emphasis on
 - Rewarding increased work effort and income
 - Lowering cost to administer
 - Making fraud very difficult

Suggested Approach (4)

- Try to design system that could replace existing income support programs
- Map out and cost operational design then run administrative test of program in various locations
 - Only eligibility criterion family income under specified threshold
- Review by oversight body before full rollout

Thank you

Questions?