

2009 EVENT TRANSCRIPTS

THE 2009 BILL GREEN FORUM

THE OBAMA AGENDA

Overcoming Poverty in
New York and the Nation

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MILANO THE NEW SCHOOL FOR MANAGEMENT AND URBAN POLICY

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DURING HIS 14 YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Bill Green established himself and earned widespread respect in both political parties as a progressive Republican with a passionate commitment to issues such as urban affairs, affordable housing, civil rights, reproductive freedom, and bipartisan collaboration for the public good. He became known for his courage in crossing party lines to pursue policies that he felt were in the interest of social justice and of the New Yorkers he represented.

I joined Milano as a faculty member just a year before Representative Green passed away in 2002. Unfortunately, I did not have the pleasure of getting to know him. During my time at the school, however, and particularly now, as dean, I can see that the same courage and commitment that was evident in his government service was also at work in his life as a private citizen. He served on many civic and charitable boards, and was generous and forward-thinking in his philanthropy. At The New School, he joined the board of the Center for New York City Affairs in 1969, became a university trustee in 1986, and later served as chair of Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy. The scholarship support that he provided to Milano students—especially minority students—stands out among his many good works at The New School. Thanks to Representative Green, more than 100 Green Scholars have earned master's degrees and gone on to important and rewarding careers; today Milano remains the most diverse of any academic division at The New School. I am pleased and proud that his widow Pat remains a good friend of the school and our students, and continues to support the Green Scholarship Fund.

Milano inaugurated the Bill Green Forum in the spring of 2008, with support from the Taconic Foundation, to provide an opportunity to learn about the issues that were important to Representative Green and that remain important to the Milano community and to the public. On April 30, 2009, I had the pleasure of introducing Taconic Foundation president John Simon for the opening of the second program in the series, The Obama Agenda: Overcoming Poverty in New York and the Nation. Following John's memorable remarks about our program's namesake, Andrew White of the Center for New York City Affairs at The New School welcomed David Hansell of the

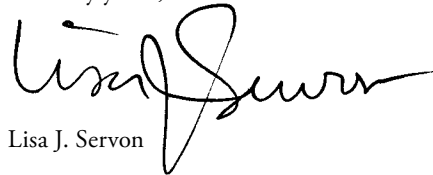
New York Office of Temporary and Disability Insurance, Ron Haskins of the Brookings Institute, Margarita Rosa of the Grand Street Settlement, Veronica White of the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity, and Debbie Weinstein of the Coalition on Human Needs to the stage for a moderated discussion.

The forum provided an opportunity to hear these ideologically diverse thinkers and activists in the fight against poverty talk about some of the new opportunities and resources for the nation's urban areas. The conversation focused on the Obama administration's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009—particularly the new budget plan, which includes numerous investments in potential funds for child and family services, as well as economic support for low-wage workers.

The panel began with a provocative conversation on the very definition of poverty, debate over the validity of current criteria, and speculation over the adoption of a more inclusive poverty measure at a federal level. Political differences were apparent as panelists explored their ideas for addressing the federal budget deficit, though a surprising consensus was reached about the need to reduce tax cuts that benefit the wealthy. The conversation moved from strategies to aid working families to a critical examination of military spending, and addressed social security and the federal future of sick-leave for single-parent working families. All participants brought a depth of intellect and thoughtfulness to the forum which made their differences of opinions and politics constructive and illuminating.

I believe, and I hope you agree, that this discussion was a worthy tribute to Representative Green's life and work. I dedicate this record of the 2009 Bill Green Forum to the Taconic Foundation, to Pat Green, and to her late husband's legacy.

Sincerely yours,



Lisa J. Servon
Dean



From Left: Andrew White, David Hansell, Margarita Rosa, Ron Haskins, Veronica White, and Debbie Weinstein

**MILANO THE NEW SCHOOL
FOR MANAGEMENT AND URBAN POLICY**

WHO'S WHO

Introductions

LISA SERVON

Dean, The New School for General Studies and Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy

JOHN SIMON

President, The Taconic Foundation

ANDREW WHITE

Director, Center for New York City Affairs

Panelists

DAVID HANSELL

Commissioner, New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

MARGARITA ROSA

Executive Director, Grand Street Settlement

RON HASKINS

Senior Fellow in Economic Studies and Co-director of the Center on Children and Families for the Brookings Institution

VERONICA WHITE

Founding Executive Director of the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity

DEBBIE WEINSTEIN

Executive Director, Coalition on Human Needs

LISA SERVON Welcome to The New School. I'm Lisa Servon, the Dean of Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy and I'm so happy to be here tonight. It's going to be a terrific program and I am so happy to see all of you.

This is the second in our series of programs honoring the late Bill Green, member of Congress from Manhattan from 1978 to 1992. He was a trustee of The New School and member of the Milano Board of Governors and a generous supporter of Milano for many years.

We'll hear more about Bill Green in a moment, but I just want to say a few words about how his career in public service represents much of what the Milano School is all about.

Congressman Green was a pragmatist and a problem solver. He believed in bringing people together to find solutions to the urban and national problems of his time. And he did it in much the same way that we train our students, some of whom are here tonight. Students, can you raise your hands so we see who you are? There they are. And this is a really tough week for students to be doing anything, including sleeping, let me tell you.

He found the smartest people, the most practical-minded and capable men and women, regardless of party labels or misleading concerns about ideological purity. And he learned from them and worked with them to develop answers to extremely complicated questions.

As a congressman from New York in the 70s and 80s, Bill Green devoted a great deal of time to issues affecting urban families and the working core, such as affordable housing and job creation.

As chair of our school's Board of Governors, he could see that our students were doing the same and he supported them in their endeavors by providing scholarship support through the Green Charitable Foundation. Bill and his wife, Pat, subsidized the education of well over 100 Green Scholars, who are having an incredibly beneficial impact on their organizations, cities and communities through their work.

If he were here with us today, I think he'd see our students in urban policy and nonprofit management working tirelessly with local government officials, community organizations, and advocacy groups to figure out how this city can respond to the current economic crisis.



Lisa Servon

This issue is timely, not only because we have a new president in the White House, but because so many Americans are still living in poverty. Even by the most modest measure—the federal government’s official poverty line—more than 37 million Americans live in poverty today.

Today, many of the reforms developed in the last 15 years to create powerful incentives and support for work, to get people off of public assistance and into jobs, are running headlong into the reality of rising unemployment.

So what should the Obama administration do? And what can states and cities do to use new federal funding and new federal programs to improve their own policies and make a greater impact on poverty?

I’m very pleased that in the spirit of Congressman Green, we have brought together an impressive panel of experts, representing a bipartisan cross section of the best thinking about strengthening anti-poverty programs.

Before I turn over the program, I’d like to acknowledge some special people who are here with us tonight. The first is Pat Green, a longtime friend of Milano who has continued the tradition of providing scholarship support for our students, and who has worked closely with us to make this series a reality. Thank you, Pat.

Two of the current Green Scholars are with us tonight: Victoria Elison and Soledad Ursua. Victoria and Soledad, would you stand up so we can see you? There’s Soledad. Is Victoria here? She must be on her way.

And would you all please join me in acknowledging Pat, and Cynthia Colin.

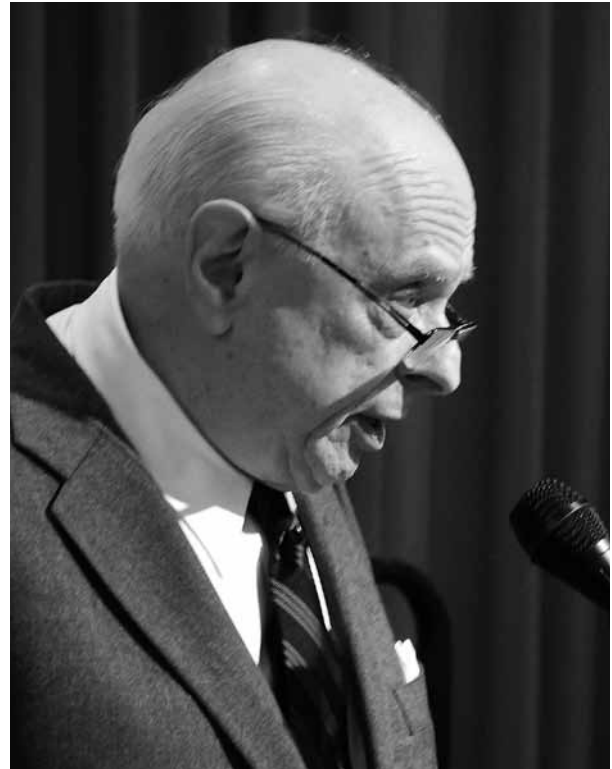
[Applause]

Lisa Philp and Sara Rosen are also with us tonight. They play an immensely important role in the Center for New York City Affairs’ and Milano’s work, including, but scarcely limited to, tonight’s Bill Green forum.

And last, but certainly not least, I’d like to thank John Simon, the president of the Taconic Foundation, which underwrote this program, and our next speaker. His full bio is in your program, and his vision has really helped guide this series. Please welcome John to the podium.

[Applause]

JOHN SIMON Thank you, Dean Servon. On behalf of the Taconic Foundation, I’m delighted to greet you all and greet this fine array of speakers—including, by the way, one Taconic colleague, Veronica White—and to express the Foundation’s appreciation for the Milano New School



John Simon

sponsorship and execution of the Bill Green Forum Series. And to have a couple of minutes—I promise not to spend more than that—to speak about the wonderful man whose name graces this forum: Bill Green.

Bill was a Milano trustee and a Taconic Foundation trustee at the time he passed away six-plus years ago. But that combination is far from the only reason we honor him today.

His was an entire lifetime of public service—as a state legislator, as regional federal HUD administrator, and for many years as a member of Congress from the 15th Congressional District, in addition to a staggering array of other community and philanthropic activities.

He was also the brightest person I ever knew. It showed up in several ways. For example, 60 years ago, in 1948, we were putting out an election-night edition of the Harvard Crimson. Bill was looking at the Dewey-Truman election returns and key precinct data, and doing some kind of regression analysis with his slide rule. We had no computers in those days.

And suddenly, he said, “Do you know what? Truman’s going to win.” And I, although pro-Truman, said, “Oh come on, how can that be?” “It will happen,” Bill said. So

[Bill Green was] ahead of the crowd, ahead of the curve, and also incredibly generous in every sense of that word, including an unending search for improvement in the human condition, a search that led him to commit his vast energy and intelligence, after Congress, to a wide array of public-serving causes when so many others would have gone off to the beach.

—John Simon

in the next two minutes, he writes a news analysis and we go down to the print shop in Cambridge, Plimpton Street, and set up an enormous wood block headline, which was going to say “Truman Wins,” but I was chicken so it said, “Truman Ahead.” Only one other daily newspaper in all of America came out with a headline that morning that tilted in that direction. Most were much closer to the famous Chicago Tribune headline, “Dewey Wins.”

Bill was not only bright, but he was very proactive. A few years later, when he and I were doing military duty at the Pentagon and sharing a house in Washington, Bill said one evening at dinner that he was going to a meeting of a local bar association and he urged other young lawyers to go with him. The reason? He and some others were going to call for a vote in favor of admitting black lawyers into the Bar Association. It was then, indeed, segregated, by which I mean white-only association. But that fact had gotten little or no public interest, and most lawyers paid no attention. Not Bill. He saw the issue and moved ahead without waiting for a crowd.

Over the years, Bill was always ahead of the crowd, ahead of the curve in so many ways. In 1970, when he was about to take office as regional HUD administrator, my wife and I asked him what was going to be his highest priority. Quote: “To get some low-income housing built in the suburbs.” Again, ahead of the curve. The issue of suburban exclusion was on no one’s agenda. The civil rights people and the urban planners hadn’t grasped that nettle, but Bill did, and courageously so.

And when he went into Congress, he was again ahead of the curve. One example: his publicly expressed cautions, probably quite unpopular on the Hill, about manned, as compared to remote-controlled, space exploration. A second example: his personal participation in a pre-1989 effort to convince Mikhail Gorbachev to move the Soviet Union toward a federal system as an essential ingredient of the transition from autocracy.

Further examples: his earlier championing, while in Congress, of environmental issues and federal support for scientific research.

Ahead of the crowd, ahead of the curve, and also incredibly generous in every sense of that word, including an unending search for improvement in the human condition, a search that led him to commit his vast energy and intelligence, after Congress, to a wide array of public-serving causes when so many others would have gone off to the beach.

Over the last decade of his life, Bill engaged vigorously and brilliantly across a broad and varied front: healthcare; medical research; science education; the aging; the environment; urban development; family planning; federal, state, and municipal governance; and of course, higher education where Bill was aided enormously by Pat Green’s own experience and service.

For Bill, there was no letup, no letup, none at all until the very end. His was a great life, fully waged. Thank you.

[Applause]

ANDREW WHITE Good evening. I’m Andrew White. I direct the Center for New York City Affairs here at the Milano School.

I’m going to open things up with a framing of the issue and then we’ll just dive right into a conversation. And I’m very glad to see that Debbie made it from the late Amtrak train from D.C.

So first of all, I just wanted to find out how many of you are newcomers to events here at the Center. How many have

never been to anything we've done here before? Good. So there are a lot of returnees. I'm always happy to see that.

In addition to teaching politics at the Milano, I run the Center, which I hope most of you know for our work around child welfare policy and public schools and other issues related to anti-poverty work in the City. We do this work combining investigative journalism with policy analysis, and collaborating with government and nonprofit organizations and coalition building. All of it geared towards trying to advance improvements in public policy, particularly around children and family issues and neighborhoods and anti-poverty work. You can read a lot more about our work from the materials on the table or on our website, which is www.centernyc.org.

I think everyone here is familiar with the massive transformation of welfare policy, or I should say anti-poverty policy, in the United States over the last couple of decades. It began with the radical shift in welfare policy during the 1990s. And in New York, the Giuliani administration actually was ahead of the curve compared to what was going on in Washington with its Work First policies more than a year before Congress and the Clinton administration passed the 1996 welfare reform.

For many of you in this room, it's not news that the number of people on public assistance in New York City declined from almost 1.2 million in 1994 to just over 462,000 people in 2001. During the Bloomberg administration, it has fallen even further, to 342,000 as of two months ago.

There's been a longstanding debate in New York and elsewhere about whether the shrinking number of people on public assistance has been matched by adequate supports for those of them who've moved into the workforce, or adequate supports for people in crisis, or for the single mothers and their children who make up such a vast proportion of the poor in New York and other cities. And that debate continues.

A report published just this week by the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies found that the number of applicants for cash assistance went up substantially statewide since 1999, even as the number of people receiving cash welfare has plummeted.

So that's probably a significant reflection of what's going on behind the very public policy changes, but there's another hugely important element to these changes in public policy in recent years. It's very clear that low-income people who have gotten jobs have been able to tap into one of the most massive wealth distribution or wealth transfer programs in the nation's history: the earned income tax credit,

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—Andrew White

which shifts tens of billions of dollars every year from higher-income tax payers to low-income working people. More than 23 million families and individuals nationwide received the EITC last year, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. And New York itself has its own earned income tax credit, which amounted to about \$700 million last year and the last few years before that, putting that money into the pockets of working people.

Similarly, in just the last couple of years, the number of people receiving food stamps has gone up sharply. In New York City, the increase has been nearly 30 percent, just since June of 2007, to more than 1.4 million New York City residents receiving food stamps.

So money and support are indeed finding their way to millions of working-class and poor New Yorkers, and yet none of this has solved poverty. Nor have any of the other dramatic changes in policy and programs that have taken place in recent years, many of which, if you work in the nonprofit sector, you've been part of. Today, we understand a lot more about the impact of stress on poor people and how it affects people's minds. And people have developed interesting programs on how to deal with that. We know more than we used to about the quality and value of early education programs and of family support services and of access to affordable healthcare. And we understand why things like nurse-family partnerships, strong home visiting programs, work.

And yet with all of this understanding and all of these new creative programs, New York City's official poverty rate remains at nearly 20 percent, which is substantially above



Andrew White

where it was 30 years ago. And many other cities are in much worse shape than New York.

By the more precise poverty measure developed by the Mayor's Center for Economic Opportunity, under the guidance of Mark Levitan, a New School graduate, and one of our guests, Veronica White, the poverty rate in New York City was 23 percent in 2006. And we can be sure those rates would be higher if we measured them today in the midst of the recession.

So today, we face a horrendous economy and people are spending less, companies are cutting back, and unemployment's rising sharply. It's pretty bleak. But during the last few months, there's been a great deal of action in Washington under the new administration. Very little of that work has involved public discussions about poverty, and yet, as you'll hear tonight, there are a lot of things happening just a little bit below what's been discussed publicly by President Obama.

In part, I think that may be a result of the fact that the Secretary of Health and Human Services was only approved by the Senate this week and took office this week. That's Kathleen Sebelius, who actually was here speaking about a year ago. It may also reflect a decision in the White

House that the Stimulus Act and the reforms that President Obama has proposed in his budget bill need to help the broad swath of the middle class or middle-class America, as well as the poor.

But the reality is that underneath all of this, important changes are taking place and some of them could change the ways in which states and cities do business in terms of strengthening the safety net, lifting people's incomes, and maybe once again transforming the way we try and overcome poverty.

I'm very happy to have a great panel here today. I'm going to give very short introductions of each of them. The longer bios are in your programs.

David Hansell is commissioner of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance [OTDA], which is the state agency that oversees all of the local social service agencies. He was chief of staff of New York City's Human Resources Administration [HRA] during the first Bloomberg term.

Margarita Rosa is executive director of the Grand Street Settlement, which operates programs for more than 10,000 people each year, including early childhood education, after-school programs, youth development and leadership programs and a senior center.

Ron Haskins is a senior fellow in economic studies and co-director of the Center on Children and Families for the Brookings Institution. Earlier in this decade, he was senior advisor to President Bush for welfare policy, and prior to that, welfare counsel to the Republican staff for the House Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee.

Next to him is Veronica White, who is the founding executive director of the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity [CEO], part of the Mayor's office established by Michael Bloomberg in 2006. Previously, she was COO of the New York City Partnership, President and CEO of the New York City Housing Partnership and a deputy commissioner at the Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

And at the end of the table is Debbie Weinstein, who is executive director of the Coalition on Human Needs, which is based in Washington. And previously, she was director of the Family Income Division of the Children's Defense Fund.

So as for the format, I'm going to ask questions, we're going to have discussion, I'm going to try to keep it as conversational as possible. We're going to have time for questions. When we get to that stage, a couple of staff are



David Hansell

going to be holding mics and will come around. So when I ask you, you can just raise your hand and people will bring mics around.

So to start off, I guess we'll start with David. There's been this longstanding shift away from cash assistance and towards working supports and entitlements like food stamps. So how have—and that parallels your career in this agency and in HRA—how has that transformation changed the way that you do your work and the way that you oversee the local agencies?

DAVID HANSELL Good question. Well, Andrew, first of all, thank you for having me and thank you for putting together this important program. I also—since you've recognized a number of luminaries in the audience—I would feel remiss if I didn't acknowledge Herb Sturz who is here with us, who I'm sure many of you know, and there's probably no one who's done more to improve the quality of life in New York City than Herb. I'm delighted to have you here.

[Applause]

I did spend time in New York City before my current position, but I think I'll let Veronica speak for the city. I don't want to do that. So I'll talk a little more about

my recent work at the state level at OTDA. As Andrew mentioned, the overall trend that we've seen over the past dozen years or so, since the advent of welfare reform, is a tremendous movement of welfare recipients, mostly single mothers, into the workforce and off of public assistance, a trend that I think most of us feel is a positive one. But it hasn't necessarily led to their moving out of poverty. In fact, in most cases, it has not led to them moving out of poverty, and the statistics there have refused to budge in the same way that the welfare statistics have.

So the approach that we've taken over the last couple years at the state level—and have worked very closely with HRA and the other local districts around the state to implement—is really a threefold approach. First of all, recognizing that most of those who have left public assistance, moved into the workforce, have landed and remained in low-wage jobs, which do not move them out of poverty. But there are, as Andrew mentioned, a very robust set of work supports and economic supports that can supplement wage income and make a dramatic difference in people's effective income. However a lot of people, for a variety of reasons, weren't taking advantage of them or couldn't access them.

The first area that we focused on is how to strengthen that network of economic supports for low-wage work. We've done that in a lot of different ways. I'll just mention a few specifically. One is our Working Families food stamp initiative. Andrew mentioned that food stamp enrollment since June 2007 is up 30 percent in New York City. The economy has a lot to do with that, but June of 2007 was also when then-Governor Spitzer announced the Working Families initiative through which we expanded eligibility for the food stamp program, increased access by removing a number of the barriers that we thought were interfering with working people accessing food stamps. As a result of that, we've seen significant growth in that program.

We've launched a program we call Work Pays, where we're actually trying to use employers as an access route to make sure that their employees get not just the benefits that the employers provide, but also the public benefits that federal, state, and local government provide. And we think employers can play a strong role in that. We're working with hundreds of employers around the state to make that happen.

And we have also launched a statewide Web site, very much parallel to the Access NYC system that New York City has done, called My Benefits, to make it, again, easier for working people in particular who can't afford to take time off to go down to a social services office to get those benefits. So that's one prong of what we've done.

Second is to realize that those who remain on public assistance have not been able to make the transition as easily as those who have left into the workforce. And so we've tried to enhance our emphasis on skill development. We've tried, in a sense, to rebalance the Work First approach, which was the hallmark of welfare reform, and was successful when there were a large number of people on welfare who could easily make that transition, but just never had really been pushed to do it, to where we are today, where we have a lot of people on welfare who can't so easily make that transition, and largely because they just don't have the basic skills to do it. So we've tried to enhance that. We're ramping up education training programs. The current state budget actually makes a significant new investment—and this is—a lot of this is stimulus supported so this is a very good marriage of the direction in which we're moving and the support we're getting from Washington. A big increase in job training programs, transitional jobs programs, green job programs, healthcare jobs, various kinds of things to make sure that those opportunities to develop skills are going to be there for people who, even in a good economy, had a tough time moving directly into the workforce, and in a bad economy are going to have an even more difficult time doing that.

The third prong of what we've tried to do is to strengthen the safety net for those who are most vulnerable, who are going to have the most difficulty even making that progress. And probably the hallmark of that is the implementation—again, through the current state budget just enacted—of the first increase in the state's welfare grant—the basic welfare grant—in 19 years, so that those who are on welfare are going to remain on welfare, at least for some period of time, because they're having a tough time even making those first tentative steps into the world of work, and will have a more ample source of support.

So those are the three things that we're focusing on, and I actually think the stimulus will help us in all three of those areas.

AW The increase in the grant was a result of the federal move as well, or was that homegrown?

DH Actually it was not. The original proposal was made by Governor Patterson, and I have to say I think this is tremendously to his credit. In his executive budget, which he announced last December—despite the fact that he was making cuts across the board—because at that point he had a \$12 billion budget deficit to close, to demonstrate his intent to protect those at the bottom ranks, he proposed an increase to the welfare grant, even in that situation. However, initially he proposed that it would take place only next January 1st so the budget impact this year would be minimal.

If [Bill Green] were here with us today, I think he'd see our students in urban policy and nonprofit management working tirelessly with local government officials, community organizations, and advocacy groups to figure out how this city can respond to the current economic crisis.

—Lisa Servon

Partly because of the stimulus, but actually more than the stimulus, because of another source of funding, which has gotten a lot less attention, called TANF [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families] contingency funding, a longstanding funding stream that was available from the early days of TANF to help states through economic downturns, but which New York and most states had not accessed until recently. Because of our food stamp caseload growth, we have just accessed that funding stream in New York State. That's going to be worth about \$400 million to us. And the combination of the stimulus money and that funding enabled us to accelerate the grant increase by 6 months so it will take place in July of this year, rather than January of next year.

AW Which is an interesting point. I mean, the fact that you were able to push hard to get more people into food stamps actually led to getting more money for TANF from the federal government.

DH That's right.

AW And that's been on the books for 10 years or more, but nobody's done it.

DH That's right. The only states really that have taken advantage before were a few states after Katrina, a few southern states, and most still have not, but we have been able to do that.

There are 400,000 more people in poverty than when I started my job a year ago. So it's not exactly an easy conversation to have, but the mayor understands that it's an appropriate mechanism because you need to actually understand who's in poverty, and where and when, and how many people, and in what neighborhoods in order to begin to address the issue and appropriately target your resources.

—Veronica White

AW Right. Interesting.

RON HASKINS Andrew, can I make a brief comment—

AW Sure.

RH Poverty is a ridiculous measure. I think everybody admits that now, especially here in New York City where they have a much better poverty measure. But if you use the official poverty measure, poverty plummeted after welfare reform passed. It fell to—among female-headed families—it fell to its lowest point ever nationally. Poverty among black children reached the lowest point it ever reached. And even after the recession of 2001, poverty was still, among single-parent families, 20 percent lower than it had been in '93 before welfare reform. So there was a major impact on poverty, at least nationally. And you can see why. It's exactly the point of your question.

There are families out there who earn \$10,000 and have \$30,000 worth of their own earnings, plus government benefits if you count the insurance value, Medicaid, food stamps, earned income tax credit [EITC], which alone could be \$5,000. So we have really created a terrific system that's even better here in New York City. Unfortunately, cost of living is higher in New York City too, but—

AW Right.

RH —with the EITC supplement. So I think that the combination of individual effort and government programs has really had a major impact on people living below whatever line you want to draw. Poverty's one, but any other line you want to draw, fewer people are below that line, especially female-headed families, than before welfare reform.

AW Debbie?

DEBBIE WEINSTEIN You know, there were a lot of things going on at that time period when those positive outcomes happened. And certainly it was good that there was an emphasis on helping people go to work, but there were jobs. And so the big struggle that we have now is when there aren't enough jobs, how does the system respond?

AW Well, I think it's fascinating in New York, where we had a couple of boom times in the period since welfare reform plus a recession and now a new recession. And yet the poverty rate has fluctuated between about 23 percent and I think at the lowest—this is the official traditional poverty rate—the lowest it got was about 18 percent. So we've never quite benefited, to that degree. We did benefit from incredible tax revenues that made it possible to spend more on services and so on, which is a nice transition to Veronica White, if you could talk a little bit about the work you're—well, first, if you want to respond to this.

VERONICA WHITE So a little bit on the poverty measure. I think it's really hard to know really what's been going on in some ways because if what we're counting is three times food—as what the threshold is, which is what we're using under the federal poverty measure—and we're not counting housing costs, which we know in New York City, almost everyone spends 50 percent of their income on, no matter what their income is. It's really a little bit ridiculous. No one is spending a third of their income on food.

And then on the other side, we're not counting the earned income tax credit, which here we have at the federal, state and city level. We're not counting the CEO. We just implemented a new child care tax credit. It's taken up by 50,000 families. When I suggested it, we talked to the

mayor about it, he said, “Okay, well, how many families is this going to take out of poverty, Veronica?” And I said, “None, it’s not counted.” So he was, like, “Well, okay.” But I said, “We have this new poverty measure,” and he said, “A new poverty measure, what’s that all about?” I said, “Well, once we do it, there will be more people in poverty,” and that’s what we did.

And so, yes indeed, Mark Levitan—thank you for great New School credentials—fortunately joined us from CSS [Community Service Society] and put together a poverty research team. There’s five people on my staff that are working on these types of issues. And basically then I had to go back to the mayor nine months later, after he worked with the ACS [American Community Survey] and the MEPS and all these other various data sources, and went back and said, “There are 400,000 more people in poverty than when I started my job a year ago.” So it’s not exactly an easy conversation to have, but the mayor understands that it’s an appropriate mechanism because you need to actually understand who’s in poverty, and where and when, and how many people, and in what neighborhoods in order to begin to address the issue and appropriately target your resources.

So it’s hard to know what changes take place when we look at everything under that federal poverty measure. Mark and his team are going back now and going backwards and going forwards and trying to look at, through our lens now, what exactly happened to poverty, under a more adequate measure. And we didn’t invent it. We based it on the work of the National Academy of Sciences [NAS] that recommended this measure in 1995. But we’re going to be looking at that and see what’s—what impact that period of time and some of the benefits and things that have happened in government have had. Did they or did they not have an impact—and on what populations?

AW And the state is now going to adopt this as well, right?

DH That’s right. Thanks to the great work that Veronica and others did. We think it’s time to do that.

AW What’s the chance that the federal government will decide to go down that road and actually transform the poverty measure to something that’s more useful?

VW I think it’s going to happen. The legislation was introduced last term and it’ll be introduced again in the next few weeks by Senator Dodd and Representative McDermott. We were down in Washington last week meeting with them. They’re going to be introducing it. I think once it’s on the President’s desk, I mean, how can you say no? I’m not sure that they would want to push it...But in any case, they did strongly during the Clinton



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administration. I know a number of people that worked on the effort then, rejected doing it. Becky Blank, who was on the original NAS panel, who has been enormously helpful to us—she’s at Brookings and wears a number of other hats—in developing our measure, has been nominated by the President to be, I believe the title is Under Secretary of Commerce, but all I know is she’s in charge of my portfolio in terms of this measure. So I’m very hopeful that this is going to pass and we’ll be able to actually look at the number realistically and there’s no better time to get a handle on the number than, frankly, as soon as you’re elected and in a recession, for Obama.

I mean, it’s a little more difficult. I came into this administration here in New York five years into the administration and then said, “Oops, more people in poverty than what you’ve been thinking have been here for a few years.” So I think it’s a lot easier to just start out, figure out the right number during this bad time and get a handle on it and move forward from where we are.

AW Ron, what would be the Republicans’ take? I mean, I know you’re not necessarily the typical Republican, but what do you think the Republicans’ in Congress take would be on the idea that—

RH Yeah, I haven't changed parties yet, sir.

AW There you go. I was going to ask you about that in a little bit, but this would mean, presumably, more people in poverty, except it would also account for a lot of really important things.

RH I don't think, necessarily. And certainly, what we've done over the last 15 years, as I pointed out already, there are many fewer people in poverty if you include all of the benefits that I described, and the official poverty measure pays no attention to those.

So I don't think Republicans would resist this very much. I think there would have been a huge fight if the new poverty measure were used to distribute funds among the states. You've never lived 'til you've been in a formula fight in Washington, D.C. And the states will really—they just tear each other apart. And New York and California almost always win because they're, you know, disproportionately influential, so maybe you would like it.

But I think that they will do this and I think the administration will do it. I think it's very significant that Becky Blank went to Commerce 'cause Commerce has jurisdiction over all the data that makes up poverty. And Becky is—I don't know how many people here know her, but Becky is kind of like Veronica. She's someone you would not dare to disagree with.

So I think the signs are very good and that we will change the poverty measure and we will have a better measure of poverty and we'll be able to track things over time.

Now, how it will relate to official poverty in the past, my guess is that Census will continue to publish the official measure so we will have a continuous set. But I'd also point out that Census has published experimental measures that are quite close to the New York measure for many years. So we do know other measures of poverty so I think continuity will not be much of an issue. I think it will be passed this year. It will be the official measure, but it will not be used to determine benefits among the states.

AW Right. Okay. David?

DH Yeah, just to pick up on that. I think it is important to make the distinction between using the alternative measures for analytic purposes, which is to really understand better what the distribution and incidence of poverty is, and to use it for benefits, eligibility, distribution purposes, which is much more difficult, as Ron is suggesting.

And one of the things that we may have to face down the road, if Veronica's prediction is correct, if this becomes a



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national enterprise, is sort of increasing divergence between what our data tell us and where we're targeting our benefits. And that may be something we have to focus on. But I think that would be a good challenge for us to have to deal with because we point out where our distribution is not, in fact, representing the patterns of need.

AW Right. Debbie, more broadly, could you explain for us what you've seen happening in Washington so far under Obama on the issues that we're talking about this evening?

DW Well, it's been fairly transformational, that all of us who have worked for many years on trying to get additional benefits for low-income people and have had very modest successes here and there and certainly do want to acknowledge that there were increases in food stamps under President Bush and, in fact, that administration worked to expand access to food stamps so it's not a wholly partisan issue.

But faced with the terrible recession and the hardships, there was a response both by the Obama administration and Congress so that the economic recovery bill that passed in February had a fairly stunning number of areas of assistance for the lowest-income people. And what's compelling about

I strongly favor compassion and want us to feel that that is a very valid reason for doing things. But it was the economists across the economic spectrum who were saying, in order to move the economy, we have to help the people who, if you give them the money, they are going to turn it around and spend it. And that will mean a shared recovery.

—Debbie Weinstein

this and important for us all to learn from and work with is that this was not simply done for reasons of compassion.

And I strongly favor compassion and want us to feel that that is a very valid reason for doing things. But it was the economists across the economic spectrum who were saying, in order to move the economy, we have to help the people who, if you give them the money, they are going to turn it around and spend it. And that will mean a shared recovery.

And they found, for instance, that the most effective bang for the buck form of economic stimulus was increasing food stamps because that money was going to be spent and it was going to be spent in that month and it was going to be out there in stores and communities. And so the economic recovery package included a substantial increase in food stamps. It included an increase in the child tax credit, as well as the earned income tax credit, again, going straight to the people who were most in need, including—and I—because I was late getting here, I didn't put it on the table, but I've got a five-page chart of items that at the Coalition on Human Needs we thought were particularly of importance to low-income people.

So that was the first step, shot out of the box, you know, almost \$800 billion, much of which was either going to assist states so that they didn't have to make cuts in really vital services like Medicaid, or direct aid to low-income people.

And now, our next phase is the federal budget that just passed, the budget resolution Congress passed yesterday. And you can think of that as the permit. If you go to the Building office in your city or town to build or renovate a building and you get the permit to do it, that's kind of what the budget resolution is. Nobody ever moved into the permit. Now we've got to build, but at least we have the way of building substantial improvements to help low-income people. So there is no question, but there's a change.

AW So for people who don't work in D.C., can you explain a little bit about the difference between what the budget resolution means versus actually appropriating all the money for all the programs that are listed in there?

DW Right. Close the doors. People are going to flee. Well, as I say, the budget resolution is kind of like an outline or a framework. It basically commits Congress to move ahead on, say, healthcare reform, but it doesn't tell them how to do it or how much they'll spend on it. All of that is yet to be worked on. But if they didn't make that commitment, it would be very much more difficult to do it. Similarly, with things, big priorities, like climate change.

The one thing that is binding on Congress is the amount of money that they include within it for annually-appropriated programs. And there, you know, somebody like me, I wish that they had put a little more in there for the domestic programs. They didn't put as much as the president requested, but between the House and Senate, they came pretty close to what the House, which was the higher amount, appropriated. So that now has to be divvied up amongst all the appropriations committees and they will make decisions on things like how much for housing, how much for the WIC [Women Infants and Children] program, how much for certain child welfare services and a whole host of other things.

AW So we'll come back to that big picture in a minute, but narrowing it to something as specific, for example, as child care or the kinds of programs that Grant Street Settlement, for example, runs and so many families in New York rely on. What has changed just in that area, the area of child care, for example. I think there's substantial new money in the Recovery Act, correct, Debbie?

DW Yes. That's one of the major gains, after many, many years where Congress did not add money for child care or Head Start. And, in fact, taking inflation into account,

those programs were shrinking. There were temporary—as Ron is going to want to remind us—temporary increases for child care and Head Start of substantial dollars.

AW Okay. Margarita, let's bring you into this. What are you seeing on the ground among your clients in terms of the impact of the recession?

MARGARITA ROSA Well, Grant Street Settlement is a settlement house so we're a multi-service organization that serves people of all ages, families and individuals. And so we provide services in a sort of one-stop shop.

But in addition to the services that we provide—which is everything from early Head Start, Head Start, daycare, after-school services, the senior center, subsidized housing for low-income senior citizens, after-school and college prep programs for teens and school-age children—we also, through the Robin Hood Foundation, became a site for Single Stop, which was an initiative that is now under the umbrella of Single Stop USA, in which we were provided with a tool to help assess our constituents' eligibility for any number of entitlements and services, including Section 8 vouchers for housing, SSI benefits, unemployment benefits, Medicaid, food stamps, et cetera.

And just to give you a picture of the numbers that come through, I was doing a comparison of the numbers coming through Single Stop in—between January 1st of 2008 and August of 2008, we had 923 participants that were enrolled, unduplicated participants enrolled. So that's, you know, over a 9-month, 8-month period. Between January of 2009 and March 27th of 2009, we had 544 unduplicated participants come through the door.

So in one third of the time, we had more than half the number of people coming through our doors seeking services that we helped to connect them with through Single Stop. We were able to assess their eligibility and then we're able to direct them to the appropriate agencies and other sources of services so that they can connect with the services to which they're entitled.

And interestingly enough, Single Stop also attaches a dollar amount to every service that we provide, whether it be measuring the actual dollars that come into the pockets of the recipients of the services, or counting non-cash—value of non-cash benefits to those people. And our figure for the overall benefits received by our constituents that came through Single Stop between January of '08 and August of '08 was over \$2.5 million brought into the community and into the pockets of low-income people, through the combined efforts of Single Stop and the tools that they provide and the networks of services and a settlement house,

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—Margarita Rosa

a community-based organization that's known and trusted by the people in the community. And they come to us seeking assistance.

A lot of them also—we work with partners that do income tax returns, prepare income tax returns for them. We had an explosion of people coming through to get their income tax returns prepared, to get the earned income tax credit and other benefits to which they're entitled.

So there has been a significant growth in the number of people coming through. The traffic's pretty heavy. This is only one Single Stop site. There are numerous sites throughout the city that I'm aware of, and many of them in multi-service community-based organizations like our own.

AW Margarita, what have you learned out of that kind of money flowing through that kind of focused, creative program? What does that tell you about the way we need to be delivering services? Are there lessons there that we need to be taking more broadly?

MR I think what we're experiencing is reflective of what was said earlier, which is that getting dollars—to the extent that we're able to—into the pockets of people who, A, need them, B, will use them, spend them, because they don't have the luxury of, you know, investing in the stock market or anything so—

AW They're lucky.

MR —they need to kind of go out there and spend it, which probably isn't such a bad idea at this point anyway—is a



Margarita Rosa

good move. And I also think that it's important to recognize the role of organizations that are on the ground, known to community people and respected and trusted because, in the absence of those, you can come up with some terrific government programs and beautifully-designed models but really, the devil's in the details. And how that gets to the people is what really makes a difference in whether those policies look good on the ground as well as on paper.

DH Right. If I can just add one thing that I think, if our goal is to make these entitlement benefits as accessible to people who need them—particularly working people—as possible, one very significant step, which is really what Single Stop represents, what Margarita's talking about, is moving from essentially the welfare model where you have to go to a central social services agency, governmental agency, to get your benefits, to a community-based organization model where you can go to a community organization which may be more accessible to you, which may have different hours, which offers you more opportunities.

The next step beyond that, I think in many cases, is to move to a true online model where you essentially don't have to go anywhere, as we don't have to go anywhere now to do most of the things that we do. We can shop online, we can

get information online. I think that's the next step. And that's where we're trying to go with our My Benefits system. I think the city's moving that direction as well, but I think that really should be our ultimate goal.

AW All right. Interesting. Veronica, since we're talking about experiments, you're the guru on experiments here. Tell us a bit about the lessons that you've learned over the last couple of years.

VW I think one of the most important lessons is that the experiments can't be done within just an agency's budget. You can't expect someone who's running dozens of programs in any agency to take part of their money away from basic needs of what the agency has to do and expect them to come up with new programs because it means killing existing programs in order to do that, which isn't really fair because you don't know whether these experiments work or don't work.

So I think it is important that my office is located at City Hall, having a similar innovation fund, which is what we're proposing at the White House—and the White House has actually set up a number of innovation funds not quite like ours, but similar, and it's important to have funds on top of the other money that's being proposed in the budget.

For example, there's \$20 billion that Joel Klein has in education. My whole budget's \$150 million—but my money's very flexible money. You could create different programs. But if you, instead, said, within that agency, within the education department, to try to set up a fund to create different programs, it wouldn't necessarily happen. It's better to do it from a distance and to sort of break down some of the silos across the various city agencies. And I think that could be useful, certainly for the federal agencies, even more so.

I think it's very important, as was mentioned earlier, community-based organizations are very, very key. The nonprofit sector is the key to government delivery, it's key to innovation and it's a key part of all of the CEO programs.

And I think that when people think about innovation, it doesn't have to be as long-winded and complicated a conversation and program as Opportunity NYC, which is our conditional cash transfer program, which has a five-year evaluation attached to it, it's very expensive, it's being paid for by the private sector. We've had numerous conversations with a number of people in this room about it. It could be a very simple, a very simple thing that we did, which was we—as in the New York City Department of Finance—sent back to individuals their tax returns and said, Veronica White, if this is really your tax return, you really made



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this amount of money, this is accurate, sign here, send it back, you're qualified for earned income tax credit from the state, city and the federal government. And we brought \$14 million back to poor families just by doing that. And we're now talking to the IRS about doing it. I think New York State might be doing it as well following that.

We're going to do it at a federal level. If people don't know about the EITC, that's very simple, cost us almost nothing and brought a lot of money back into poor families' homes, and they deserve the money. They earned the money and they just didn't know about it. So that's very simple, not much money attached.

And then at the other extreme, we have the conditional cash transfers, lots of money attached, lots of evaluation going on. So there's no one-size-fits-all for any of these programs. And some of them are going to be expensive and I think that when you pilot programs, you can do things at an expensive rate.

Another example is, we have a one-year nursing program. It costs us \$28,000 per year per person. It's a great investment. The individuals coming into the program are making \$13,000. They leave the program after one year, they're making \$40,000. So instead of getting the earned income

tax credit from the city, state and federal government and the child care tax credit from the state, federal and now the city government—it was the first—one of the first CEO programs that we set up was the city child care tax credit. Now, instead, they're actually paying taxes—though I don't think at \$40,000 they actually should be, but that's another story—but there is \$40,000 they're earning and they've gone from 13 to 40 in a year, which is pretty much overnight—but it's small. There were 39 people in the first year—1 person, unfortunately, didn't join us as it started—and 40 people now in the second year of the program.

So innovation is expensive, but you should try that, look at it, look at the cost-benefits and then see whether it should be ramped up at a larger scale. So some could be simple—the EITC—some could be complicated, and some are going to be expensive. And when you're piloting things, spend the money because if you do it on the cheap, it might not work and then you'll never know whether perhaps it didn't work because you weren't doing it right or it didn't work because it was a bad idea.

AW So these are intentionally small, but which of these experiments are you beginning to think are truly scalable and could make a difference for thousands or tens of thousands of people?

VW Well, the EITC, simple experiment, is going to be ramped up by the fed so the IRS is looking at it now. So that's simple, doesn't cost much money at all. On the other hand, the CCT is very expensive.

AW What's that?

VW The conditional cash transfers. Very expensive, a long, five-year evaluation is taking place. If it ever is to be ramped up, it would be with federal money. It's not the kind of program that one would ever expect the city government would take on.

So other programs that we're thinking about ramping up—for example, if we can find the real estate, which we can, actually, in this market, so there are some things that are actually for the better, right? We can look at starting a new nursing school. One of the hardest things, besides finding the money, is going to be finding the instructors because we pay the nursing instructors far less than—and not much more than the graduates of our program, our LPN program. This is licensed practical nurses. We need full-fledged RNs, some with PhDs, that are teaching in the program. Hard to come by and hard to find enough to make the commitment. So it's not just a question of money, but there are other resources that have to be considered at the same time.

What we're looking to do is, what kind of WIA [Workforce Investment Act] money can be used, what kind of stimulus funds can be used to ramp up some of the existing CEO programs. And we're doing that kind of analysis now at the city level. But we think more than that, there should be other monies that maybe don't have the same prescriptions as WIA that could be used as well.

AW Great. Ron, want to get back to the big picture that we were talking about a few minutes ago? You know, most of the biggest expenditures in the recovery act have not really been targeted at the poor, except for the ones that Debbie listed. Probably the biggest of them are middle class tax cuts and benefits. You said that the biggest obstacle to long-term improvements in poverty policies will be the federal deficit down the road. How do you take what's happening right now around social policy and around tax cuts and so on in Washington for the middle class and reconcile that with what we can expect a few years from now?

RH Well, first of all, I would correct Debbie who said that Obama's policies were fairly transformational. It has an extra word in it. They are transformational. They are revolutionary. He would change American society in huge ways through his health policy reforms. He expands virtually every social program that you can name, either through the stimulus package or through the budget.

But here's the main point: it's unsustainable. We cannot have all this. I remember when I was a kid there was a commercial on television for Bosco. Some of you—there are a few old folks out there—you may remember. And they had a little kid and he said, "I want my Bosco and I want it now!" That kid has grown up. He's us. We want our Bosco so much that we're going to make our children and grandchildren pay for it. Republicans were completely rotten on this issue, and Obama's even worse. We're going to have at least trillion-dollar deficits every year from now into the future until they more than double or triple because of the retirement of the baby boomer. We pay huge amounts for Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, but especially Medicare.

So it's not sustainable. We can't have all this stuff. It's as simple as that. I mean, we may love these programs, and I want you to have money. I have great admiration for what you're doing, but we are literally passing the bill to our children and grandchildren. What kind of compassion is that? We cannot have all these programs.

So, I mean, it's a house of cards. Congress has passed a budget resolution, get us off on one full step, \$1.4 trillion deficit, declining substantially to over a trillion in the last year. And the difference between the Obama estimate and

I was disinvited once to testify before the Budget Committee because the Republicans knew that I had supported tax cuts and they withdrew the invitation.

—Ron Haskins

the CBO [Congressional Budget Office] estimate is over \$4 trillion over a 10-year period. So Obama's deficits will more than double, almost triple, the total public debt of the United States, much of which is now owned by foreigners so I'm really worried about the extent to which foreigners may have an impact. And at some point, they're going to stop buying our securities. And then what are we going to do? I mean, no one has an idea. This is a tragedy that's unfolding. And as I say, this is not a partisan statement. Republicans were perfectly awful. I personally opposed the tax cuts and spoke like that at the time. I was disinvited once to testify before the Budget Committee because the Republicans knew that I had supported tax cuts and they withdrew the invitation.

But Obama takes it to a whole 'nother level and we can't do it.

AW So on the flip side of this, you have been a big supporter of a lot of various entitlements and sort of a floor for low-income people in this country. What is the alternative? What would you advocate be done differently, but would still achieve the goals that you want to see for children and family?

RH I think the key is to transfer funding from the elderly to children. That should be our major goal. And we can trim Social Security. God knows what we can do about Medicare. I mean, the President says he's going to save \$400 billion, 300-and-some billion dollars over the next 10 years. I guarantee you that is not going to happen. We've never been able to save money in Medicare. CBO scores it and we can't do it. So I don't think there'll be any savings for Medicare. I don't know what to do about Medicare.

But Social Security, there are a lot of things we could do that would not hurt the elderly very much. We could do it in a means-tested way so that we didn't hurt the low-income elderly at all. We could start it 10 years from now or 15 years

from now and guarantee the current system for anybody over 50 and we could—just changing the rate of the inflation adjustment would have a huge impact. It's crazy to have a retirement age of 67, which is what we're going to eventually get to. It ought to be much higher than that.

So there are several things that we could do and transfer the funding from the elderly to children. That's how we can sustain children's spending.

The basic answer for the deficit is cut it in half and fill half of it with tax increases, that have to go way beyond the upper 5 percent or 3 percent and the other half with spending cuts, primarily from programs for the elderly.

DW Well, let the record show that there is not unanimity on this panel on—

AW [interposing] Clearly.

[Applause]

RH Debbie, so tell the audience your plan for dealing with the deficit. Or do you think we can sustain trillion-dollar deficits for now and forever.

DW I don't believe that. And there's no question but that there are hard choices to be made. And one that really requires, in the most important sense, that our democracy has to be a participatory one, where we all have to play a role in shaping the choices. And they will be hard choices.

But many economists believe, in terms of your specific point here that the solutions in Social Security, those are not the hardest ones, that we can get a handle and we must get a handle on our healthcare costs by a far-reaching approach on healthcare.

Now, will we do what we ought to do? I don't know. And that's where the participatory democracy comes in. Because we could, as the political negotiations go on in Congress, wind up just kind of getting to the agreement because we ladled on some more money to the health insurers. That's not going to make the savings that we have to make. But there are savings to be made in Medicare.

One relatively small, in the whole scheme of things, example is the private Medicare Advantage plan, which provides more money to the private insurer than the regular Medicare program, thereby somewhat undermining Medicare and costing us more money. That's one area. And the president wants to make that savings so there's a start.

But in general, I appreciate that Ron has been one to say that the tax cuts that were passed since 2001 were gigantically reckless and have put us on this pathway that

we could not afford, widening the gap between the rich and everyone else, contributing to the problems that we now face in the economy. We have to reverse that.

And I will say that—thanks, that person who clapped, just keep that going. You know, I will say that we can't solve all of the problems that Ron is right to put in front of us simply by undoing the reckless and greedy tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans. Over a period of time, when we're out of the depths of the recession, I think we're all going to have to step up to the plate and there may be more revenues that we're all going to have to play a part in. And I believe that Americans are willing to pay that.

The thing that I see in poll after poll and people all around the country is they want to take responsibility for this nation and they're willing to play a part and not just to force it off on somebody else. So that's going to be part of it. And yes, indeed, there will have to be savings in expenditures too, and the military ought to be one of those areas.

[Applause]

AW So Ron, on one of the topics that wouldn't necessarily involve federal spending, Congress and the President are calling for a Family Leave Act, some kind of legislation that would require the private sector to institute Family Leave and flexible hours for working parents. Do you see that happening this year, and would you support something like that?

RH I don't know if it'll happen this year, but certainly it's high on the Democrats' agenda and it's high on the President's agenda, and in this case, probably even more important, it's high on the first lady's agenda. And it could happen this year if the first lady really focuses on this and tries to—there are plenty of bills, there's plenty of oats. I think they could pass it if they really focused on that, but they have so many other things to focus on. I think it'll be more likely next year. Probably start with sick leave, have some requirements on sick leave, and then move on to family leave, more broadly than just sick leave. So I think there's a very good chance, it's probably about 50/50 it'll happen within the next two years.

AW And do you think it'd be a good move?

RH I'm really worried about what we pile on the private sector. This audience, I can tell, is completely with me on this point. But I think we are putting a lot of obstacles in front of the private sector, and this is another one. We've done a lot of things to unemployment insurance supported by the very worst kind of taxation because it's a tax on every single employee that you hire. So I probably would not support it.

AW David, from the state's perspective, from the governor's perspective, I mean, the idea here is that so many low-income families are single-mom families, single mothers who are working and need flexibility in order to keep their jobs. Is this something that you guys are supporting?

DH Well, I'm not going to speak for the governor about whether to support it, but I would say that, you know, as we look at supporting families, I think it is important that we look at both long-term benefits that create a basic level of economic security, but also look at ways that families could get through particular crises. Because it's true, and particularly in single-parent families, if the single parent is the breadwinner and the single parent gets sick or the child gets sick, that's going to be a family crisis. And so if there isn't some way to bridge income, that's part of the reason, I think, although I don't know that we have a good analysis of this, why, as you indicated earlier, that applications for TANF and public assistance programs are up. A lot of that has to do with churning because that population has such a difficult time remaining engaged. There are a lot of reasons for that, but one of them is because of family instability, that if we have other ways to bridge gaps in income, we might be able to enable people to remain more self-sufficient.

AW Interesting. Veronica?

VW I can't say where the mayor is on this, but just a few points that would be interesting to look at. I mean, obviously, there is the issue of what would happen to businesses—and nobody wants to layer anything more on them when they're laying off so many people now. That's definitely something I know he would consider in his calculation.

But something interesting—especially given the events this week—to think about is, the public health issues that come up when people feel obliged to go to work because if they don't go to work, they're not going to get paid. And I think that that has to be a fair part of the equation as well.

And so one of the interesting things that we're going to be looking at in our conditional cash transfer program is we're paying families to go to the doctor. People are, like, well, these are families that make less than \$13,000? Yes. That means they qualify for Medicaid? Yes. Well, why are you paying them to go to the doctor? And I say, because they're your housekeeper and they're your babysitter and your part-time person in your business and you're not giving them sick leave. And a few funders gave me money when I said that so I guess they took it okay.

So the truth of the matter is there are a lot of people in those kinds of jobs and they're not—so we're actually looking at that. And it's going to be interesting—

Legislation's going to pass before we get our research out of MDRC, but in the meantime, what we're doing by looking at that issue is to be able to say, we have a control group, we have the program group. We're paying the people in the program group to go to the doctor. And none of these people get paid sick leave, I can guarantee you. If there's, like, 3 percent of people in the study that get paid sick leave, I'd be surprised. So we're going to be looking at that issue, and that kind of data will really be very helpful in forming decisions.

But I think really, the other big issue is, at this moment, that we wouldn't have been thinking about two years ago, is the condition of small business and the public health issue. So every issue has its time and its crises that help mold it, for better or worse.

AW And its extreme complexity. So we're going to start taking questions from you all in just a minute, if—

RH [interposing] Can I just try one more time on the budget?

AW Sure.

RH 'Cause I feel highly motivated to—

AW [interposing] Go for it.

RH So let me give you two numbers—these are CBO numbers so I didn't just make them up. The first one is that we're going to collect \$2.4 trillion in revenue next year. We're going to have a trillion—1.4 or 5 trillion dollar deficit, but we're going to have trillion-dollar deficits every year in the future. Now, ask yourself, if we start at 2.4 trillion and we're already in the hole, we have to fill that hole, plus collect another 1 trillion. We'd have to almost double revenues to be deficit neutral. Think about that.

And the second thing is that our interest payments in 2019, if the Obama budget passes, will be \$700 billion, \$.7 trillion interest payments.

AW You knocked them dead.

DW They're speechless.

AW They're stunned. But it's interesting to look back at the Clinton administration and see that they ratcheted up the earned income tax credit by an enormous amount to a program that's now worth tens of billions of dollars. It's nothing on the scale of the stimulus package, for example, but at the same time that they did that, they generated a

huge surplus in the budget before the Bush administration smashed that apart.

So it's not a great comparison, but isn't there an argument that, by transforming the healthcare system, by transforming other ways in which the federal government does business, we can be transformative in the economy and generate higher revenues in the years to come?

RH I have a simple answer: no.

DW We don't know. You know, we could screw it all up. We could be poised to see a real substantial decline in the standard of living of Americans. We could be witnessing the beginning of our decline. But we don't have to be doing that.

And one thing I think is pretty clear, if we make no effort to invest, and maybe one of the biggest possibilities for us, apart from retooling the healthcare system, is in the climate change and renewable energy sources. Before we embarked on the exploration of the Internet and all of the uses of that and the ways of expanding our economy that comes from the kinds of technological advances that can be made, no one would have really predicted it. You know, maybe we have a chance at making those investments to increase our wealth. I believe we need to try and we need to try it in a way where it is more likely that that wealth will be shared.

And I do believe that the kinds of things that are being attempted in New York City and now in New York State, and that the Obama administration wants to try, and we have to push, will make it a lot more likely that we'll have a shared prosperity.

AW So in a second, we're going to go to questions from the audience. If you have a question, please raise your hand now so that the people with the microphones can come around.

David, should the federal government set a floor for economic security in this country? Is that what our goal should be, and what would that take?

DH I'm not sure how to answer that question. If you're asking should the government set a guaranteed income, which is a proposal from many, many years ago, I'm not sure that's a good idea. I think the core construct of the TANF program is a good one, which is that the focus should be on—not on just purely providing a guaranteed income stream, but should be on helping people move towards self-security, helping people move towards employment, which is ultimately going to be the root to self-sufficiency for most people.

But I do think the federal government could do a lot more than it's currently doing to provide benefits that incentivize

the kinds of progress that we're hoping to see families and individuals make.

AW Do we have somebody? Okay. And please identify yourself.

PRABHAKARAN My name is Prabhakaran. I'm an alumnus of New School, and now an employed PhD. My question is for Dr. Haskins. We share your concern for the skyrocketing deficits, but one suggestion that you made that—securities, one way of reducing deficit, the answer is no. The whole country will say no.

But raising revenue, certainly, we have to find a way. Any time there is a suggestion, even a remote suggestion, that tax has to be levied in some area, the Republicans would say it is an unpatriotic measure, no lesser person than the former vice presidential candidate, Sarah Palin said so. She mocked it. Joe Biden actually mentioned that patriotic people do pay taxes.

RH Yes.

AW So what's your question?

PRABHAKARAN Question is: could you come up with one suggestion, other than reducing Social Security, as to how to reduce the deficit?

RH Well, I think Social Security is the key for now because the changes are so easy and they'd be relatively painless if we did it now and we could save tens of billions of dollars.

Another: our farm programs are absolutely nuts. The mayor even talked about farm programs, believe it or not, when he came to Washington and gave a speech that Brookings sponsored. The farm programs, most of the money goes to people who make over \$100 or \$150,000. We could save a minimum of 11 billion a year. Now, that's peanuts, but that is a start.

But Social Security is still the key. That's where the big money is. And then the other big source of money is going to be increased taxes, but not just on the upper 2 percent. It's going to have to be much more general. Americans are going to have to pay it.

AW This seems like this goes far afield, but there's an interesting point to this, which is that, if deficits do go through the roof, the first programs to suffer are often programs for low-income people.

So, over here?

ZAID SADOUN Hi. I'm Zaid Sadoun from New York City Council Finance. And my question is how transitional is poverty? If I'm poor this year, what are the odds that I'll be

poor next year? Or if I'm poor as a child, what are the odds I'm poor—or historically, what fraction stay poor as adults? Is it okay to say poor? Do you have to say “in poverty?”

RH I just looked at those numbers. I can send you something that goes into detail, but the answer is, if you're poor in a given year, the probability you'll be poor the next year is elevated, but it's not even close to 100 percent. There are a lot of people who move in and out of poverty. Some of it's systematic.

We've done several analyses that show if you follow very simple rules, at least graduate from high school, get a job, get married, have children, in that order, or don't have children and don't get married, but don't have children when you're not married, if you follow those rules, the probability you will be in poverty at age 30 is miniscule.

So the answer to your question is, it does—the probability's increased that you'll be in poverty in the next year, but it's not even close to 100 percent. There's huge movement in and out of poverty.

Once you've been in poverty, it's almost like a virus. You can get rid of it temporarily, but it can come back. So you couldn't look at just the next year. You have to look over a longer period of time. If you look just at the next year, I would say at least a third, maybe more, of the people in poverty in any given year are out of poverty the next year. But the probability they come in a year after that or a year after that is elevated as well. So you have to look over a longer period of time.

VW The data that we have in New York captures point in time, and we don't have longitudinal studies. We'd be interested and we actually thought about doing that. They're just very, very expensive to do, to actually follow human beings and see where they cycle in and cycle out of poverty. We do know from certain studies that are done that immigrants are more likely to get out of it faster, that there are communities where people move in and out. So there are studies that are done, but we can't talk about the 23 percent and really break it down and tell you those details because we haven't done that kind of research.

RH There is a study though, called the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, University of Michigan, that has data over a 30-year period. You can look at parents and their kids. So you can do all kinds of fancy stuff and it does show a lot of movement into and out of poverty.

AW And you've got to look at segmentation, market segments, you can call it. I mean, in New York, some of the students at the New School are technically in poverty,

but they're not in poverty in the way that about 50 percent of the single mothers in New York City are in poverty. And those mothers are likely—much more likely to stay in poverty for several years.

MR Can I just comment on that?

AW Yes.

MR You know, we have in our sector, human service organizations, lots of people who are employees who really are in poverty, which is a sad commentary. And it's not because we don't value their service, but because the dollars to compensate them adequately do not come through the funding sources, either the contracts that we get from government or from other sources of support for our work.

So it's a sad commentary, but true that many times in community-based organizations, you'll have employees who were participants in your programs, took a step up, were employed in your program, but are still earning poverty-level wages and may not emerge from that status in the time that they're working for you. It's a sad reality, and I see heads nodding because I suspect that some of you are experiencing these challenges yourselves.

And so when we look at how to deal with some of these programs, I would urge policy makers to look at what their expectations are when they contract with nonprofit contractors. Maybe some kind of fairness in contracting might be something worth considering because no for-profit would perform the level of service that nonprofits are expected to perform for what they're paid to do it. And yet, the service is the same service so there has to be some serious look at a significant sector of the economy that employs people and helps support the poor. And I look at what government does and how it treats its relationships with those contractors to see whether the policies make sense and are helping to reduce poverty and address the needs of the constituents of those organizations and others similarly situated, or whether it's just making everybody tread water and continue to operate at a level that really isn't economically viable for any extended period of time if you really look at what we're doing.

AW Over here?

SCOTT CAPLAN My name is Scott Caplan. My question is, instead of reducing Social Security benefits and increasing the retirement age, why not do what the President proposed during the campaign, namely eliminating the cap on income that is subject to Social Security taxes? And also with respect to funding for poverty programs, why not substantially

increase marginal tax rates on the millionaire class, even at the risk that our mayor might move out of this country?

[Applause]

RH I've already said in general that half of the budget deficit should be filled with tax increases so I don't have a general argument against tax increases. But people should realize that the upper 10 percent of earners in this country pay well over—almost 60 percent of federal income taxes. So we already have—we have one of the most progressive income tax systems in the world, and it's going up substantially as a result of reforms that Obama's proposed that I have no doubt will pass in Congress.

So we're already doing a lot along the lines you suggest, but it's not enough money. We have to cut spending. Spending is a huge key here. There's no way around it. You're not going to get enough out of taxes without doing serious damage to the economy. I think every single economist agrees on that.

AW Over here?

FEMALE VOICE Well, also on the issue of sustainability of funding social service programs, I wanted to know how directly the military spending affected the transition from surplus to the deficit. If you held all other spending constant, but just looked at military spending over that period of time, how direct would be the relationship? I guess for Ron.

RH The long-term trend in military spending is down. We've had very substantial reductions. Now, the wars have stopped the decline, but we're going to start—the decline will start again, especially as the percentage of gross domestic product. So we are already making lots of adjustments in military spending, and we've done that over the last three decades.

DW But in the more recent past, the trend is very much in the other direction. And, of course, some of it is the war—but that's military spending and many of us believe in a horribly wasteful fashion. So, yeah, there is a lot of room to go in terms of reducing military expenditures.

And some people have done analyses to show, for instance, that even totally leaving aside the war, that there's about \$60 billion a year in wasteful weapon systems, antiquated, that do not increase our security where there are savings possible. So there's room to move in the military area.

I'm unfortunately blanking on the—

RH A bunch of liberals made it up.

AW Oh, I wish some of those liberal economists who work in offices next to mine were here.

DW Well, I would have such a—

AW I'm not one of them.

DW —zinger if I could remember the guy's name, but there is a military analyst who worked for Ronald Reagan, and he is the one who is the main source of this. I will just call you up later with his name, but truly, he worked for Ronald Reagan.

RH Well, we have a Democratic president, Democrats control the House and the Senate. They now have a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate. Let's see if they cut \$60 billion out in military spending.

DW When I talked about hard choices, and Ron is talking about hard choices, it's going to be a tremendous battle to succeed in this area. I agree. That's what I mean by participatory democracy. There's a public interest here that requires these kinds of changes, and we may or may not get there, but we have to try.

AW And the same can be said on the agriculture subsidies—

DW Yes.

AW —and many other areas. Right here.

MARLON WILLIAMS Hello. Marlon Williams from United Way. My question is, in many ways, the tragedy of poverty is in the way in which it persists over a long time, and many of the investments that are being made now are really restorations of things that weren't fully funded before. And so I wanted to ask in terms of when we come to these things, we always kind of want to know what to do afterwards. What investments would the panelists recommend in addressing not poverty today, but how do we break into generational poverty, and does that necessarily involve working on social services or are there other areas that we might want to consider?

AW Great question. David, you want to start or—

VW Well—

AW Veronica?

VW —I have a very simple answer. We are proposing that the White House come up with a federal urban innovation fund that would work with various cities across the country and pilot different experiments where you put the full money in to see does something work, does it not, and not just re-jigger and retool certain programs that are there. And we were advocating that when we met at the

White House last week to discuss it. The mayor's been front and center on it.

I do want to say that the Obama administration has funded several other innovation pilot programs I'm thinking about. One is within the Department of Education that they're going to be piloting innovative education programs. Another within the White House, they're looking at a social innovation fund, which will be working with nonprofits. So this is an idea that they're thinking about, but we really think it'd be great to do multi-city pilot programs, fully funded in small numbers, you know, we only have 2,400 people actually getting money in our conditional cash transfer program, but look at something that's very innovative, it's very different, and try to see if it works, and then if it works, then you could take it back and think about changing the structure within agencies and how, indeed, whether or not these programs could be ramped up.

AW David?

DH Marlon, I'm going to twist your question a little bit because I think it goes somewhere else. And that is how we most effectively use the short-term stimulus money that we have. And this is something—Ron has very appropriately warned about the fact that we're going to fall off a cliff at some point because this money isn't going to last. And if we build structures around it, we may have a problem.

So I think it behooves us to think about how we use this tremendous short-term opportunity to achieve longer-term gains. And I think we need to think about things like how do we make the right kinds of strategic investments with this money, how do we use the money to do the kind of thing New York City's doing, which is to test innovative models so that we can find those that actually do work and make the case for longer-term investment in them. I think we have to be strategic about what we do with this resource because it's certainly not going to be there at the same level into the future. I think it gives us a chance to try out some things and think about where we may want to turn some of the short-term investments into longer-term investments that make sense.

AW Right.

RH I'll only make a brief comment. You used the word restoration. I don't know if you intended to do that, but there's no restoration. I think that people's understanding of spending on children and social programs is deeply influenced by reading the *New York Times*. There have not been cuts in children's programs. Over the last four decades, either as in constant dollars, as a percentage of the federal budget, or as a percentage of gross domestic product, we

spend more on social programs than we have in the past. There has been some moderation in the last several years, but if the Obama budget passes, they'll zoom up again.

So we're spending a lot of money. We're not spending it well, I think. We should spend more on post-secondary education. There's no question that that provides a tremendous boost to low-income kids. If they can get a college degree, their probability of going from the bottom 20 percent, if their parents are in the bottom 20 percent, they can increase by a factor of four the probability they'll make it all the way to the upper 20 percent by getting a college degree. So that's one area.

Preschool also is an area. It's not just a matter of spending the money, though, 'cause we have to have quality and we're not very good at doing that. So there's a lot of work to do there, but those are the two areas that I think we would possibly get long-term payoff and really help low-income kids to make it—to move up the income distribution.

AW One more question.

ELISABETH MASON Hi. Elisabeth Mason from Single Stop USA. How are you? I love the idea of innovation funding, and I think that this is the time, with this new administration, to really rethink the paradigm for fighting poverty in America. But I am also thinking about Andrew's comments when you opened this forum, around all the things that we do know do work. We know that investment in early childhood works. We know that the earned income tax credit's been a tremendous wealth transfer. We know that food stamps really support families. We know that job training can move people up the economic ladder.

I think there are a lot of solutions out there. And when I think about the field of poverty fighting, I feel as if there are many weapons, but no battle plan. And I wonder whether any of you could address the issue of the battle plan and whether there's a possibility to use this opening in national policy, which I think is the first one we've had in 70 years of this type, and use the innovation funds and the ability to think outside the box, but applying some of the old tools and some of the lessons learned, to really come up with a comprehensive response to something that, perhaps for the first time in two generations, we may be able to really get traction on. Thanks.

VW I just think a basis of any program has to be education. You have to have—and I know, to Ron's point and to the mayor, his biggest investments have been, as I said, \$20 billion in the Department of Education, that's in the city's budget.

Early childhood education is so key, as well as post-secondary. One of the reasons that we're investing in a program with CUNY, which is with the six community colleges, it's called CUNY ASAP, it costs \$6,000 per student, a little more than that, on top of the tuition. And that's because we're putting in all kinds of other programs and assistance to help them get through, from paying for all their books to putting in academic advisors that are ordinarily not present in the community college system, that's probably making it a little bit more of this school, maybe, having resources that are there for the students that don't ordinarily exist in the community college system in New York City.

We're measuring those students and we're anticipating that at the end of the summer, 30 percent of them might get through, get their associate's degree, compared to 12 percent in our comparison group. That's what we're looking to and that's what the evidence is pointing to right now.

So those kinds of investments that, as Ron pointed out, a college degree—and this is only an associate's degree—if we can get a fair amount of those students then into a four-year program, that would be a huge change. So I think that all around education, from the beginning all the way through college, has to be a clear part and the basic of any kind of anti-poverty agenda.

AW Debbie?

DW Thank you for that question. One of the things that some of the groups that I work with have tried to do and are just starting to do in this regard is to develop a campaign that we're calling Half in Ten. And so that sets a goal, or at least our goal is to have there be a national goal to cut poverty in half in ten years. And I work for the Coalition on Human Needs, the Center for American Progress, ACORN, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, to try to bring that to national attention. The Obama administration has voiced support for this, but, as everyone has said, they've got a lot on their plate. But we would say, yes, we ought to operationalize this, as they have done in the United Kingdom, so that all the agencies of government say to themselves "what do we do that will have an impact on lowering poverty" We need to be more intentional in that way, to do the kind of innovations that New York City should be so proud of, and to try to expand them. And you're quite right. Some things are ready to be scaled up if we invest, but it still should take the evaluation of where those are going and when we do it, what happens and, yeah, we do need that change in the poverty measure 'cause otherwise, we won't see that it's worked.

But I do think that the possibility of a campaign like this, setting a national goal, would help drive the kinds of changes that you're talking about.

AW So I'm going to ask the last—oh, you wanted to say something?

MR Yeah, I wanted to echo what Elisabeth said, that we place a lot of emphasis on innovation, and I think innovation is certainly worth pursuing. But I think sometimes we lose sight of what does work.

And I have a comment here from the President, saying let's change the odds in urban America by focusing on what works. Well, constantly, you know, sometimes we get so caught up with inventing a new mouse trap that we forget that the one that we already have works. Why don't we invest in the components that we know are working and ensure their continued success, even as we seek new solutions to existing problems?

You know, we know Head Start works. We know Early Head Start works. It may not always be ideal, every component of it may not work as well as we'd like, it may not work perfectly in every setting, but it has, what, 43 years now of a track record of improving the odds for low-income children and poor children to succeed when they go to school.

So there are those kinds of proven initiatives. They've been with us a long time. They work. Why don't we find a way to reward what works, instead of punishing what doesn't or maybe doing both simultaneously? But basically, finding ways to make it possible for those providers that are doing a good job, that are succeeding in achieving the objectives, to do more of what's already working, while we simultaneously seek innovative approaches.

AW So one last question. TANF, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, is up for reauthorization next year. How many of you think there's going to be a substantial debate around this, around reauthorization, what needs to happen? Any of you? So if it's not going to just be overshadowed by everything else that's going on, what do you think needs to change in the TANF bill in 2010? Each of you can answer that.

RH The single most important thing is there should be an inflation adjustment because that was not put in the original installation so it's already lost 30 percent of its value.

AW Wow.

RH And the states are supposed to use this for cash welfare and as a mechanism to get people into the workforce. The

federal government should make sure that the states are at least held harmless in terms of constant dollars.

AW Right. From the budget hawk. That's a significant point.

RH Well, look, I didn't say we shouldn't spend any new money. I just want to pay for it when we spend it.

AW Right. David?

DH Well, I think the big question on the table is an important one—and I don't think we know the answer—is whether TANF is appropriately responding to the economic downturn. I think Ron has been sort of the Nixon-goes-to-China voice on this issue. I think he's been the Republican voice that's suggested that maybe it isn't. I'm not sure we know. I think the jury's still out on that, but I think it's a very important question and I think we're going to need some really good data on that to inform TANF reauthorization. 'Cause if the answer is no, it's not, if we did some things to the TANF program that don't enable it to respond appropriately in a time like this, we need to figure out what to do about that, which we can see from the fact that the TANF roles are not going up, even as the economy and unemployment come apart.

DW Right. We certainly do know, even before the tremendous downturn, that as poverty was going up, child poverty was going up, the TANF roles were staying the same or continuing to decline. So it is not—it has not been responsive, and that is something that I agree with, I highly praise Ron for his willingness to point that out.

AW Is it just the governors are scared to death of Fox News or what?

RH Well, part of the problem is a state problem, and that is that the states—when we wrote the original legislation, we gave the states great flexibility in using the money. As long as they spent on low-income families or children, and as the roles went down, they saved all this money. So what did they do? They spent it on child care, they spent it on foster care, they spent it on adoption and so forth. So they have this money spread out all over the place, and now times are hard so it's very difficult to bring it back. And to take care of that, we had a contingency fund. This was the immediate problem I think Democrats in Congress fixed, is to put new money in the—they actually created a different contingency fund that has a little better incentives for the states, and I think that was an appropriate fix. I think we do have to look at that in reauthorization because what we did has not worked very well.

AW Interesting. So I think this is exactly the kind of great dialogue that Congressman Bill Green would have

appreciated. Thank you all for coming. Thank the panel very much. What a great panel. And I hope to see all of you here again. Goodnight.

PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

David Hansell is commissioner of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the state agency that oversees support programs and economic assistance for low-income New Yorkers. He chairs New York's Homeless Housing and Assistance Corporation board and co-chairs the Governor's Economic Security Cabinet and the Interagency Task Force on Human Trafficking. Previously, Mr. Hansell was chief of staff of the NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA), associate commissioner for HIV services at the New York City Department of Health, and director of legal services and deputy director for government and public affairs at Gay Men's Health Crisis.

Ron Haskins is a senior fellow in the economic studies program and co-director of the Center on Children and Families at the Brookings Institution. He is also a senior consultant at the Annie E. Casey Foundation in Baltimore. Mr. Haskins is the author of *Work Over Welfare: The Inside Story of the 1996 Welfare Reform Law* (Brookings, 2006), co-author of *Getting Ahead or Losing Ground: Economic Mobility in America* (Pew Charitable Trusts and Brookings, 2008), and senior editor of *The Future of Children*. In 2002, he was senior advisor to the President for welfare policy and prior to that, welfare counsel to the Republican staff of the House Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee and staff director of the subcommittee. From 1981-1985, he was a senior researcher at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Margarita Rosa was appointed executive director of the Grand Street Settlement in 1995. The organization operates programs for more than 10,000 people annually, including early childhood education, after-school education, youth development and leadership programs, adult education and a senior center. From 1990 to 1994 she was commissioner of the New York State Division of Human Rights, where she had also served as general counsel and executive deputy commissioner. She has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Center for Women in Government and chair of the Division of Human Rights' Advisory Panel on Inter-Group Relations, a litigation associate at two private law firms, and staff attorney at the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund.

Lisa J. Servon is Dean of Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy. She is also a Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Work Life Policy. Dean Servon holds a BA in Political Science from Bryn Mawr College, an MA in History of Art from the University of Pennsylvania, and a PhD in Urban Planning from the University of California, Berkeley. She teaches and conducts research in the areas

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John Simon is Augustus Lines Professor Emeritus of Law and Professorial Lecturer at Yale Law School, where he has taught since 1962, including service as Deputy Dean (1985-1990) and Acting Dean (1991). Professor Simon served from 1953 to 1958 in both military and civilian capacities as an assistant to the General Counsel, Office of the Secretary of the Army, and practiced law in New York. At Yale Law School he has specialized in teaching and research related to the nonprofit sector and philanthropy (since 1963) and elementary and secondary education (since 1966). He was the founding Director (from 1977 to 1982) of the Yale Program on Nonprofit Organizations, an interdisciplinary research center. His publications include *The Ethical Investor* (with Jon Gunnemann and Charles Powers). He serves as president of the Taconic Foundation and is a graduate of Harvard College and Yale Law School.

Deborah Weinstein is executive director of the Coalition on Human Needs, based in Washington D.C. The coalition is a membership organization that promotes public policies to address the needs of low-income and other vulnerable people. Previously she was director of the Family Income division of the Children's Defense Fund, where she worked on policy strategies to lift children and their families out of poverty, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), child support, jobs and wages, housing, nutrition, unemployment insurance and equitable tax policy. From 1983 to 1993, Ms. Weinstein was executive director of the Massachusetts Human Services Coalition, a nonprofit advocacy organization.

Andrew White is director of the Center for New York City Affairs at Milano The New School for Management and Urban Policy, which produces applied research on public policies that seek to support families, strengthen neighborhoods and reduce urban poverty. He is a writer on social welfare, child and family services and the political dynamics of urban neighborhoods, and he teaches courses on politics, government, the news

media and criminal justice. Mr. White is cofounder and editor of *Child Welfare Watch* and founder of the Center for an Urban Future. Previously, he was editor of *City Limits* magazine and executive director of City Limits Community Information Services (later City Futures, Inc.). His writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Newsday*, the *Daily News*, *El Diario/La Prensa*, the *American Prospect* and elsewhere.

Veronica White is founding executive director of the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity, which was established by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in 2006. She has worked as a consultant specializing in strategic business planning and management for non-profits, real estate development and environmental issues, and public-private partnerships. She has also served as chief operating officer of the New York City Partnership, president and CEO of the New York City Housing Partnership and deputy commissioner of planning, policy and intergovernmental affairs for the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. She practiced law at the firms of Brown & Wood and Sidley & Austin. She is a member of the board of directors of the Taconic Foundation.



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The Bill Green Lecture Series memorializes the late Honorable Bill Green (1929-2002), who represented the East Side of Manhattan in Congress from 1978-1992. Bill Green was an independent thinker who frequently crossed the aisle to collaborate on critical issues such as the environment, urban policy and affordable housing. He served as a Trustee of The New School and a board member of Milano. This lecture series, which pays tribute to his deep commitment to bipartisanship, is generously funded by the Taconic Foundation, on whose board he also served.

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