Policy Brief paper discussion

Name

Institution

Instructor

Course

Date

**Feeding Homeless Youth during COVID–19 Act**

Feeding Homeless Youth during COVID-19 Act is a bill that directs the department of agriculture to compensate institutions that offer emergency shelter for meals and supplements the Child and Adult Care Food Program during the pandemic. Introduced on September 29, 2020, by the representative for Washington’s seventh congressional district, Pramila Jayapal, the bill seeks to offer public health emergency services to people below the age of 18 and those receiving assistance from these shelters. The current law excludes people above the age of 18 from benefits, but the bill seeks to expand the provision to young people living in these shelters. This includes access to free meals for people living in emergency shelters. Moreover, the bill seeks to address the issue of homelessness by pressing for all-inclusive housing provision for democratic participation for all. Nevertheless, since the bill was papered down, numerous challenges have been impacting its enactment and implementation. Those challenges are detailed in this paper.

**What factors impacted the enactment of this policy (or would impact the enactment of the policy)?**

Structural factors

One of the main factors affecting policy enactment related to the kind of support given, principal roles in creating conditions for implementers to enact the policy, degree of participation in decision and how the organization changes during the enactment. The primary challenge affecting the enactment was mainly lack of time and financial resources. Most meetings were held on zoom due to covid19 protocol rules. This was ineffective as some instances required demonstration models which were not clear. Again, covid19 is an emergency situation that required quick and aggressive enactment of the policy. Decision-making was very poor in the process. Most importantly, the government is dealing with many competing contemporary policies. There is a conflict of interest on whether to fund the feeding program or engage other policies such as the purchase of the expensive covid19 vaccines and the current incentive program of funding industries to prevent the US dollar from shrinking. Having no time was the main concern among policy enactors. The fact that the policy is of high potential requires cooperation and confidence in work. This requires time and resources.

Social factors

The interaction within the policy boundaries was also important during policy enactment. Making sure that all involved parties understood the central concepts of the policy is a big challenge. The most important thing was to ensure that the policy gains support from the states. Remember that most states ban food sharing and individual feeding programs enacted by individuals. This has been under constant scrutiny by activists and other social actors. The Secretariat Work Group (SWG) questioned the policy when the covid19 wave is over. This highlights the unending meetings to ensure multiple problems affecting the policy have been addressed. There have been challenges with coordinating with the HHS program in addressing the homelessness and feeding needs for the elderly and people with disabilities as vulnerable populations during the covid19 disaster. Developing initiatives and programs to establish the effectiveness of the act in expanding evidence base work in the presence of other programs has been very challenging. Moreover, state-level design to suspend or terminate after the wave is over has been placed under Medicaid eligibility scrutiny with the question of initiation over again in light.

**What factors impacted the implementation of this policy (or would impact the implementation of the policy)?**

Organizational problems

Feeding Homeless Youth during COVID-19 Act implementation will see policy execution at different activities in a top-down approach. Policies is set at higher levels of the political process and communicated to subordinate levels in charge of managerial, technical and administrative tasks of putting the task in practice. Political scientists address that implementing a policy using the top-down approach must have very clear objectives, skillful implementing officials, no changes in social-economic conditions, and adequate time and resources in place (Powell et al., 2009). Implementing the Feeding Homeless Youth during COVID-19 Act has been problematic due to constant changes in the political and economic arena. Since September 2020, pre-conditions set at the time of enactment have drastically changed. This has forced policy implementers to change some aspects to avoid risks of over-estimating the impact of subsequent government action on the policy (Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE). 2020). In the United States, no single dominant emergency policy is involved. Making priorities to create harmony between the current feeding policy and Feeding Homeless Youth during COVID-19 Act is a problem given the changing perspectives.

Resources

Both human and financial resources were identified as the major hindering factors when implementing the Feeding Homeless Youth during COVID-19 Act. Lack of funds was cited as the main reason behind the long process of getting the policy in place by 2021. The nation is facing tough times when federal planning requires causal and sensitive actions. The American dollar is on the verge of a breakdown following the financial crisis triggered by a business breakdown in Wall Street. Supporting the act’s provisions requires effective planning. The government is tied in a dilemma of whether funding the feeding program is a priority compared to the purchase of covid19 vaccines and emergency care improvement across the nation.

Political commitment and leadership

The ministry of health plays a significant role in taking the lead in the feeding program, but the civil society is critical in sustaining the process. Among other departments and state governments, stakeholders have been engaged in drafting many objectives and subsequent policies, guiding the process, and providing input meetings that meet covid19 protocols. This buy-in process has been taking a lot of time and the disease wave is still progressing, affecting more people. Bringing them into speed for proper discussion is still a problem as stakeholders need time to deal with their individual and organizational problems. Therefore, there is a need to develop and promote joint initiatives through interagency cooperative agreements, pooled funding for special projects, or mutual interest or benefit evaluations. For instance, implementers face challenges developing frameworks that Jointly develop policy or program guidance to assure consistency with other Departments’ policies and statutory and programmatic definitions, and/or consider joint issuance of key policy or programmatic guidance, especially where such issuance has the potential of having a significant impact on another Department’s grantees.

References

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