



MILWAUKEE JEWISH FEDERATION

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:  
APRIL 24, 1996



Milwaukee Jewish Council for Community Relations

To: Boards of Directors, Milwaukee Jewish Federation & Milwaukee Jewish Council for Community Relations

From: Tobey Libber, Chair & Mordecai Lee, Co-Chair  
Public Funding Strategy Task Force

Date: March 7, 1996

Re: Phase II Report

### I. Background:

Due to the enormous changes pending in Washington and Madison regarding tax-supported funding of social services, the leadership of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation and the Milwaukee Jewish Council for Community Relations as well as other affected constituent agencies became increasingly concerned in mid-1995 that such changes had the potential of shifting to the organized Jewish community major new financial burdens which could not be met.

In response, a task force of communal professionals was appointed to review the problem and make recommendations. The goal was to develop a targeted and comprehensive strategy for the Jewish community to work pro-actively to minimize such financial impacts through a coordinated public advocacy effort.

On August 31, 1995 the Public Funding Strategy Task Force met and recommended prioritizing the advocacy activities of the organized community around two specific demographic groups:

1. All low income Jewish elderly, and
2. Non-elderly Jewish refugees from the former Soviet Union (FSU) during their first five years in Milwaukee.

The agencies which sent representatives to the August meeting were (in alphabetical order) JCC, JFS, MJCCR, MJF (including its Resettlement and HUD Project staff), Milwaukee Hillel Foundation, Sinai-Samaritan Medical Center and Wisconsin Jewish Conference.

These recommendations were approved by the Board of Directors of the Milwaukee Jewish Council for Community Relations on September 20, 1995 and by the Board of Directors of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation on October 24, 1995. The resolution adopted by the Board stated additionally:

"In keeping with the above mentioned priorities, the Task Force should develop a more detailed strategy for education and advocacy on behalf of the highest priority

Jewish population categories and for building coalitions with the community as a whole on behalf of those most in need who are facing public funding cuts."

The Task Force met on January 29, 1996 and February 28, 1996 to implement that directive by developing "Phase II" recommendations. The agencies which sent representatives to either or both of those meetings were (in alphabetical order) JCC, JFS, MJCCR, MJF (including its Resettlement and HUD Project staff), Milwaukee Hillel Foundation and Wisconsin Jewish Conference.

## II. Phase II Recommendations:

There are hundreds of publicly funded programs that are under consideration for reform, reorganization, consolidation or elimination and which could affect the Jewish low-income and FSU populations. Advocacy efforts of the organized Jewish community would lose their efficacy if we got involved in the legislative review of every one of those programs. Declaring that everything is important is tantamount to deciding that nothing is important.

Therefore, the Task Force unanimously recommended (1) a "short-list" of five programs that the public advocacy activities of the organized Jewish community should focus on; (2) a further subdivision of that short list of five programs into "top-tier" and "second-tier" priorities; (3) an assignment of a lead agency to work on each program; and (4) creation of a special out-reach effort to maximize the citizenship applications of FSU residents.

These are the 5 programs that the Task Force identified as crucial to the Jewish low-income and FSU populations:

<u>PROGRAM:</u>	<u>LEAD AGENCY:</u>
1. Top Tier:	
a. Federal Immigration Laws	MJCCR
b. State Social Service Delivery	WJC
c. Medicare and Medicaid	JH&CC and Sinai-Samaritan
2. Second Tier:	
d. Federal Welfare Reform	MJCCR
e. State Welfare Reform (W-2)	WJC

Furthermore, the Task Force recommended that a special outreach effort be created to reach elderly FSU residents who are eligible to become citizens but have not participated in the citizenship training program of JFS, MJCCR and MJF. The preliminary steps for this effort are already underway with the assistance of student volunteers recruited by the Milwaukee Hillel Foundation. [end]