

EXECUTIVE ORDER

THE STATE OF TEXAS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
AUSTIN, TEXAS
EXECUTIVE ORDER
GWB 96-10

RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "CHARITABLE CHOICE" PROVISION
IN THE 1996 FEDERAL WELFARE LAW

WHEREAS, the State of Texas enjoys a rich diversity of private and faith-based charities that render effective and focused aid to people in need; and

WHEREAS, these groups achieve impressive results by evoking personal responsibility, transforming lives, and injecting moral and spiritual resources that are beyond government's know-how; and

WHEREAS, Texans recognize that government need not be the first nor the only provider of assistance to those in need; and

WHEREAS, Congress passed and the President signed, on August 22, 1996, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (the "Act"), which devolves welfare authority to the states and gives Texas an opportunity to fashion a welfare system that best serves all needy Texans; and

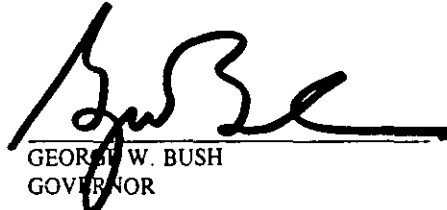
WHEREAS, section 104 of the Act contains a "charitable choice" provision that encourages states to involve private and faith-based groups as providers of services to the needy while expressly protecting the religious character of participating providers and the religious freedom of their recipients;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, GOVERNOR OF TEXAS, by virtue of the power vested in me, do hereby direct all pertinent executive branch agencies to: (i) take all necessary steps to implement the "charitable choice" provision of the federal welfare law; and (ii) take affirmative steps prescribed by the Act to protect the religious integrity and the functional autonomy of participating faith-based providers and the religious freedom of their beneficiaries. Affected agencies shall file a written report with the Office of the Governor on the implementation status of the "charitable choice" provision by May 1, 1997.

This Executive Order shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until modified, amended or rescinded by me.



Given under my hand this 17th day of
December, 1996.


GEORGE W. BUSH
GOVERNOR

ATTEST:


ANTONIO O. GARZA, JR.
Secretary of State

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE

DEC. 17 1996