



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Why Income Guarantees Makes Sense To Reduce Poverty

Michael W. Howard, University of Maine

Half a century ago, Martin Luther King, Jr., George McGovern, and Milton Friedman supported a federal minimum income guarantee. Now, as automation threatens to eliminate entire large occupational categories, a minimum income floor is once again on the **political agenda**. Cities, such as **Stockton**, California and **Chicago**, are running basic income pilot projects, inspired by similar projects in **Canada** and **Finland**.

In Maine, **LD 1324** has been introduced in the state Legislature, to establish a committee "to study the feasibility of creating basic income security." The charge of the committee will be to look at a wide range of cash benefit programs, and compare them with the existing welfare system, with a view to creating a better system of income security for all. Among the programs to be considered are a strengthened earned income tax credit, negative income tax, and universal basic income.