Indiana TANF Grant Has not Increased to Meet the Growing Cost of Basic Needs

Cash assistance benefits have far less purchasing power than in 1988, as the cost of basic items have increased and benefits have lost more than half of their value to inflation.

2021 dollars (inflation-adjusted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1988 Price</th>
<th>2021 Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant diapers</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
<td>$24.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet paper</td>
<td>$1.39</td>
<td>$5.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry detergent</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
<td>$6.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shampoo</td>
<td>$0.69</td>
<td>$2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's decongestant</td>
<td>$2.99</td>
<td>$6.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indiana TANF Grant is $651 in 1988 dollars and $288 in 2021 dollars. This is a -56% decrease.

How has the cost of personal care and household items changed since 1988?
And here’s a look at transportation costs…

- **Regular gasoline**
  - *One gallon*
  - $0.90 (1988) vs. $2.80 (2021)
  - 211% increase

- **Engine oil**
  - *One quart*
  - $0.57 (1988) vs. $4.24 (2021)
  - 644% increase

Indiana legislators should support SB 233 which would restore benefits to their value in 1996 and would tie benefits to the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to prevent future value loss to inflation.

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*1988 price based on annual national average