



COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

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The President's Veto of Appropriations for Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Must be Overridden

**Statement by Deborah Weinstein,
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If the President has his way, 2008 will be the seventh year of cuts for services affecting health, education, and jobs for millions of people. The organizations representing people of faith, service providers, labor, policy experts, and other advocates making up the Coalition on Human Needs strongly believe the President's veto must be rejected by Congress. Instead of more cuts, the nation needs to rebuild and invest in services that prevent hardship and help families and individuals, young and old alike, to have a better life.

The appropriations enacted by Congress (H.R. 3043) will allow millions more people to be served, and to be served better, than the President's proposal. If Congress fails to override the veto, Congress' modest but important steps forward will be reversed. That would be a bitter disappointment. Those paying the price will include the 1.4 million low-income households who will not receive assistance to heat or cool their homes through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Also hurt: 1.2 million underinsured people who would be able to get medical help at a community health center under Congress' bill, but not under the President's budget; nearly 34,000 children unable to receive the benefits of Head Start (or cuts shrinking Head Start services in other ways); and 173,000 people who would lose job training if the President's funding cuts are adopted. These are only a few of the services people depend upon included in this legislation. Students, older people who need food packages, working families who need child care, abused or neglected children – all do better if Congress' bill becomes law.

Energy prices are rising and the incomes of low-income people have been shrinking since 2000. Congress' Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriations will offer some help. Failing to reject the President's veto will shrink the amount of help available. We hope every Member of Congress understands the difference this vote will make in the lives of his or her constituents, and will vote to override the veto.