

October 16, 2007

Dear Member of the Pennsylvania Delegation:

Very soon you will be casting critical votes affecting the health and well-being of people in Pennsylvania. As Pennsylvania community and faith leaders, service providers, and advocates for meeting human needs, we strongly urge you to vote to invest in healthy children, educated workers, and secure families and seniors.

First, 133,000 uninsured children in Pennsylvania urgently need you to vote to override the President's veto of the SCHIP bill (Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, H.R. 976). These children and all the others who are now healthier because of SCHIP are depending on your vote. Our children cannot learn and thrive if they do not get the health care they need. We will look to your vote to override the SCHIP veto as a true demonstration of your commitment to our state's children.

You will also be voting soon on vital domestic appropriations bills. Please support investments in services that provide our people with opportunity and protect them from harm. The choices before you are stark. We hope the appropriations bills headed towards completion will preserve or expand:

- Head Start, child care, and education from birth through college;
- job training and employment services so our youth and adult workers can get ahead;
- community health centers, maternal and child health services, rural health, and mental health programs;
- services to address family violence, juvenile justice, and the prevention of child abuse or neglect;
- nutrition help for children (Women, Infants and Children (WIC) food program) and the elderly (Commodity Supplemental Food Program);
- services to strengthen communities through the Community Services Block Grant; and
- affordable housing and home energy assistance to provide stability for low-income seniors, people with disabilities, and families.

Vetoes threatened by the President are aimed at cutting these services. We strongly urge you to vote for domestic appropriations bills including Labor-HHS-Education, Transportation-HUD, Commerce-Justice-Science, and Agriculture, and to override such destructive vetoes.

So much is at stake for Pennsylvania. The President wants to force appropriations back down to levels that would for the seventh year in a row cut services for Pennsylvania's communities and families. Instead, your votes should invest in Pennsylvania's future. The House-passed appropriations bill would allow 842 more children in Pennsylvania to receive Head Start than under the President's plan. Similarly, House appropriations would provide funds for 330 more teachers than the President's plan, and would allow \$105 more special education funding for each child with disabilities in Pennsylvania. Although 480,886 households have trouble putting enough food on the table in Pennsylvania, a Presidential veto would be aimed at preventing 5 new states from being part of the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, and still worse, would stop 15,400 elderly now participating in Pennsylvania from receiving food packages. We hope the House version of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is adopted. In marked contrast, despite soaring energy prices, a veto could mean 80,600 fewer Pennsylvania households will get the help they need to pay their utilities in 2008 than in 2001.

Our neighbors, our children, and the communities we live in and serve all count on you to vote for critically important investments and to reject the cuts the President's vetoes would require. We believe these votes – for SCHIP and human needs appropriations – are among the most important you will cast.

Sincerely,

Acquired Brain Injury Network of Pennsylvania, Lansdale
 Advocacy Committee for J&P - Sisters St. Francis of Philadelphia
 Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church, Pittsburgh
 American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia
 Augustinians, Villanova
 Baby Love @ Hamilton Health Center, Harrisburg
 Beaver County Early Care & Education Council
 Benedictines for Peace, Scottsdale
 Bert's Foundation, Philadelphia
 Bethel Deliverance International Church, Philadelphia
 Bucks County Housing Group
 Cameron/Elk Mental Health/Mental Retardation Program, Ridgway
 Campaign for Working Families, Philadelphia
 Child Development, Inc., Schuylkill Haven
 Child Watch of Pittsburgh
 Children's Coalition of the Lehigh Valley, Allentown
 Children's Services, Philadelphia
 Christian Churches United of the Tri-County Area, Harrisburg
 Church Women United in Pennsylvania
 Club Posit-tron, Philadelphia
 CodePink, Reading
 CodePink, Yardley
 Collaborating For Youth Adams County PA
 Colonial IU 20, Easton
 Community Educational Resource Center, Philadelphia
 Consumer Health Coalition, Pittsburgh
 Cornell Abraxas - Abraxas Education Group, Palmyra
 COSA (DelCo AAA), Eddystone
 District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund, Philadelphia
 District 1199C Training Fund Practical Nursing Program, Glenolden
 Early Stages Learning Center, Philadelphia
 Erie Tenant Council
 Essential Energy, Ambridge
 Every Child, Inc., Pittsburgh
 Family & Children Services of Central PA
 Family Health Council of Central PA
 FLOC-For Love Of Children (Bucks County)
 Forest County Children & Youth Services, Tionesta
 Good Shepherd Sisters, Philadelphia
 Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger
 Hispanic Ministry of Delaware County
 Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania
 Institute for the Study of Civic Values, Philadelphia
 Just Harvest, Pittsburgh
 Labor Religion Coalition of Western Pennsylvania
 Lehigh Valley Child Care, Inc., Allentown
 Little Meadows Learning Center, Dallas
 Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania

Maternity Care Coalition, Philadelphia
 Mental Health Association, Philadelphia
 Millersville University, Latino Studies Program, Lancaster
 Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary, Bryn Mawr
 Montgomery County Community Action Development Commission, Norristown
 National Council of Jewish Women, Pennsylvania State Public Affairs
 NW Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network
 PA Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
 PathWaysPA, Holmes
 Pax Christi, Philadelphia
 Pax Christi, Warrington
 Pax Christi, Hanover
 Pax Christi, Hastings
 Penn Action
 Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children
 Pennsylvania Association of County Human Services Administrators
 Pennsylvania Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
 Pennsylvania Catholic Health Association
 Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
 Pennsylvania Council for Exceptional Children
 Pennsylvania Council of Churches
 Pennsylvania Home-based Child Care Providers Association, Inc.
 Pennsylvania Hunger Action Center
 Pennsylvania Mental Health Counselors Association
 Pennsylvania NOW, Inc.
 Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
 Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth
 Philadelphia Jewish Labor Committee
 Phoenix Rising Counseling Services, Scranton
 Pre K Counts, Wilkes-Barre
 Presbyterian Citizens in Action, Harrisburg
 Providence Connections, Pittsburgh
 Pt. Breeze Community Network Plus, Philadelphia
 SEIU local 668 PSSU, Philadelphia
 Sisters of Charity, US Province, Greensburg
 Sisters of Christian Charity-Eastern Province, Danville
 Sisters of Divine Providence, Pittsburgh
 Sisters of Mercy, Erie
 Sisters of Mercy, Philadelphia
 Sisters of Mercy-NyPPaW Justice Group, Pittsburgh
 Sisters of St. Francis, Glen Riddle
 Sisters of St. Francis Evangelical Life Services Group, Aston
 Sisters of St. Francis of Millvale
 Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia
 Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania
 Sisters of St. Joseph Welcome Center, Philadelphia
 Sisters of the Holy Spirit, West Mifflin
 Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton

Smedley Home and School Association, Philadelphia
South Side Area School District, Hookstown
St Joseph Church, Lucinda
Tiny Tot Child Development Center, Beaver
UMWA Local 6754, Pittsburgh
United Food and Commercial Workers 1776, Plymouth Mtg.
United for Children, Oakdale
United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania
United Way of Beaver County
United Way of Berks County
United Way of Carlisle & Cumberland County
United Way of Pennsylvania
United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania
United Way of the Capital Region
United Ways of the Delaware Valley
Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh
Vets for Peace, Yardley
WIC Program, Ridgway
Working Families Win, Kutztown
Yardley United Methodist Church
YWCA Lancaster
YWCA Mid-Atlantic Regional Council, Philadelphia
YWCA Bucks County
YWCA Greater Harrisburg
YWCA Hanover
YWCA Tri-County Area