



## COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Major National Organizations Call on Fiscal Commission to Consider Impact of Proposals on Low-Income Americans**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – More than one hundred major national advocacy organizations today called on President Obama’s bi-partisan deficit reduction commission to ensure low- and moderate-income households are not harmed by efforts to balance the federal budget.

In a letter distributed today during the second meeting of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, the organizations specifically requested that the Commission “adopt a basic principle that its proposals should not make low-income individuals and families worse off.” It also said the commission should obtain and make public a distributional analysis of the impact of its proposals on different income groups.

The letter points out that even before the recession, low- and moderate-income people in our nation had been “largely shut out from the benefits of the nation’s economic growth for two generations.” From 1979 to 2006, the average after-tax income of the bottom fifth of the population rose only 11 percent to \$16,500 in inflation-adjusted dollars compared with a 256 percent increase to \$337,100 for those in the top 1 percent of earnings, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

“Reducing public supports for this population would be unwarranted. This population has borne an undue share of the pain of the economic and political transformations of the last several decades, not to mention the deep recession from which the country is only beginning to emerge,” says the letter.

In testimony before the commission today, Deborah Weinstein, executive director of the Coalition on Human Needs and one of the organizations that signed the letter, said “Our

future is threatened if we do not make the investments necessary to prevent high levels of poverty from becoming a permanent condition.”

The letter notes that reducing the deficit is a “means to an end – the strongest possible economic future for the nation. Under-investing in low- and moderate-income children and adults would not be consistent with that goal. Indeed, smart and more adequate investments for them could help strengthen the economy and the nation.”

The letter was signed by a wide range of national organizations, including the AFL-CIO, Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs, Community Action Partnership, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Families USA, the Food Research Action Council, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the National Employment Law Project, NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, Sojourners, Voices for America’s Children, and YWCA USA. For a complete list and to read a full copy of the letter, click here: [www.usaction.org/docs/Deficit\\_Commission\\_Letter.pdf](http://www.usaction.org/docs/Deficit_Commission_Letter.pdf)

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*The Coalition on Human Needs (CHN) is an alliance of national organizations working together to promote public policies which address the needs of low-income and other vulnerable populations. The Coalition conducts analyses of federal budget proposals and policies to determine their impact on people in need. The Coalition's members include civil rights, religious, labor and professional organizations and those concerned with the well being of children, women, the elderly and people with disabilities. CHN is located at 1120 Connecticut Ave. NW Suite 312, Washington, D.C. 20036. For more information please visit [www.chn.org](http://www.chn.org)*