

July 5, 2005

PROTECTING PEOPLE FROM CUTS IN VITAL SERVICES: RECOMMENDED MESSAGES FOR THE PRESS

These messages are not dramatically different from the language you would use with a member of Congress, but they avoid policy jargon like “error rates” and “block grants.”

- **These are tough economic times.** Congress should do more to protect children and the elderly from hunger and loss of health care, not less.
- **Cutting lifesaving medical care for the elderly and children does not solve the problem of rising health care costs.** Congress should deal with prescription drug costs; it should not cut Medicaid services.
- **Most of us know a grandmother in a nursing home; most of us are only a serious illness or a job layoff away from losing everything.** Medicaid and food stamps are lifelines that Congress should protect, not cut.
- **Cutting aid to the elderly, children, or people with disabilities is a terrible choice** – both irresponsible and unfair.
- **Congress needs to get its priorities straight.** We are counting on our Senators and Representatives to oppose budget cuts that deny help to vulnerable children, the elderly, and people with disabilities while adding billions in new tax breaks for well-connected businesses and individuals.

There are thousands of families earning less than the poverty level of \$16,000 a year in our state, too often with no health insurance through work, and struggling just to put food on the table. Cutting Medicaid and food stamps just pushes them farther behind.

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