GROUP LETTER SUPPORTING RESPONSIBLE BUDGET AND DEBT POLICIES
May xxx, 2023

Dear Representative/Senator:

The undersigned ___ organizations come together to urge you to support responsible policies to strengthen our nation and build shared prosperity. Broadly shared public investments have throughout our history enhanced our economic security. Investments during the pandemic made it possible to stop a deep recession in its tracks. Now we face a choice: will we reverse our hard-won progress and risk economic decline? Or will we continue our progress by investing in our people?

The signers of this letter represent human service providers, faith groups, policy experts, labor, civil rights, disability, veterans, and other anti-poverty advocates who see the precarious position of our people nationwide. We are alarmed at calls to dramatically cut or cap spending on key anti-hunger, health, housing, early childhood, and other programs and urge you to reject efforts to take away assistance from people with low incomes or impose administrative barriers that make it harder for people to access needed assistance, including those facing food and housing insecurity, struggling with health and care costs, and dealing with other hardships that make it harder to make ends meet. The end of the public health emergency means that Medicaid, SNAP, housing and other benefits that are still needed by millions of people are shrinking or ending. Congress should be responding to unmet need; it must not make things worse.

There are proposals in Congress that would substantially cut and/or cap vital programs such as SNAP nutrition assistance, Medicaid, and the full range of annually appropriated domestic and international needs. These cuts would threaten our economy. Moody’s Analytics economist Mark Zandi and colleagues warn that deep spending cuts could trigger "a recession in 2024, costing the economy 2.6 million jobs at the worst of the downturn and pushing unemployment to a peak of near 6 percent."

Instead, we must strengthen these investments. Putting the needs of people with the lowest incomes first is both a moral and an economic imperative. It is critical that policies do more to address longstanding disparities by race and income, including maternal mortality, food insecurity, and gaps in access to affordable and accessible housing, health care, and education, along with addressing challenges for women, children and youth, older adults, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA individuals, survivors of violence, veterans, rural communities, and others. Deep cuts to anti-poverty policies will take us backwards and make us less able to sustain future economic growth.

Responsible budget choices mean support for increasing revenues from wealthy individuals and corporations, both by collecting what they owe under current law and by fair new tax policies targeting the wealthiest and corporations. Responsibility also requires you to reduce wasteful spending. Congress can do this through strategies such as expanding drug price negotiations, reducing excessive payments for corporate military contractors, and limiting detention and incarceration. With fair and adequate
revealed how to fund the investments we need and still make substantial reductions in the deficit.

Below are some of the important policies we want to highlight as areas of concern:

- **The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** is our nation’s most significant and effective anti-hunger program; it promotes economic security, health, and well-being. A number of studies have shown SNAP to reduce food insecurity by as much as 30 percent, and even more among children. Our nation must do more to address hunger and SNAP has a key part to play. Congress should reject any proposals that take food assistance away from families, or efforts to weaken SNAP’s effectiveness, including proposals to further undermine access to SNAP for unemployed and underemployed people (which force harsh time limits to assistance), including those with children age 7 and up. We ask you to work to strengthen SNAP and protect the program from cuts or other harmful changes.

- **Medicaid** covers more than 93 million people, providing low-cost, efficient health care to low-income children, adults, people with disabilities, and seniors. Expanded Medicaid coverage has played a key role in reducing the number of people struggling to access health care, while strengthening the financial health of hospitals in rural communities. Some policymakers have proposed to cut Medicaid by over one-third along with cuts to the Children’s Health Insurance Program, taking coverage away from millions of people. Instead of cutting or capping Medicaid or CHIP, we urge Congress to do more to close the Medicaid coverage gap. Further, Congress should invest in our communities by expanding the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program, to hire more care workers at better pay to serve more people with disabilities and older adults, more than 600,000 of whom languished on waiting lists in 2021.

- **Domestic and international discretionary funding** in the annual appropriations bills support a wide range of important services including housing and home energy assistance for families with low incomes (at a time of soaring rental costs), child care, Head Start and other early childhood development programs, K-12 and higher education, public health investments and veterans medical care, substance use and mental health treatment, food assistance via the WIC program and programs for older Americans, rural development programs, and much more. Cuts down to FY 2022 levels, targeted solely at domestic and international appropriations, would result in 640,000 families losing access to Housing Choice Vouchers, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; 100,000 children will lose access to child care, 200,000 children will lose access to Head Start, and 1 million older adults will not receive food assistance via Meals on Wheels, as estimated by U.S. Health and Human Services; the Department of Agriculture estimates that WIC would be forced to serve 1.5 million fewer women, infants, and children than the number of participants now projected for FY 2024. The Department of Labor projects 870,000 job training, apprenticeships, senior community service and other employment services would be eliminated. The proposed cuts would not only create additional hardships for many families, they also could create additional worker shortages, from terminated positions, discontinued training, or lack of the
child care needed so parents can work. Some proposals would do even more damage, by caps on domestic and international appropriations that would shrink services year after year. After Congress imposed caps starting in FY 2011, we failed to keep pace with needs in education, public health, housing, infrastructure, and other priorities. We need to catch up, not fall farther behind.

We also underscore that a responsible approach to the federal budget requires you to support a clean increase in or suspension of the debt ceiling. Members of Congress must not threaten default. A group of over 200 economists, some conservative, some liberal, and including several Nobel laureates, warned in a letter to Congressional leaders of a potential “swift and severe economic downturn” along with highly likely “chaos in world financial markets.” Congress can debate future spending; it must not threaten default on spending it has already enacted.

The decisions you make around investments to keep pace with need, adequate and fair revenues, and protections against dangerous cuts and default will have profound consequences for every American. We urge you to choose responsibility over recklessness, to ensure shared prosperity and to prevent self-inflicted wounds to our economy.

Sincerely,

Accord
Advance CTE
Alabama Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Alaska Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Alaska Multiple Chemical Sensitivity Association
Albuquerque RESULTS
American Federation of Teachers
American Friends Service Committee
American Indian Mothers Inc
American Muslim Health Professionals
Arizona Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families
Arkansas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP)
Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Bay Area Professional Family Child Care Network
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Bergen County Green Party
Big Cities Health Coalition
BWICA Educational Fund, Inc.
California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Caring Across Generations
Center for Disability Rights
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Chapel of the Good Shepherd Episcopal Campus Ministry
Children's Defense Fund
Church of St Francis Xavier
Church Women United in New York State
Church World Service
Citizen Action of New York
Citizen Action of Wisconsin
Coalition on Human Needs
Colorado Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Colorado Children's Campaign
Common Threads
Community Access National Network
Community Action Agency of New Haven
Community Food Warehouse of Mercer County
Community Servings
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Connecticut Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
COVID Survivors for Change
Crossroads UrbanCenter
CT Alliance for Retired Americans
DC Action
DC Metro Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Delaware Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Des Moines Area Religious Council
Desire Community Housing Corp.
Detroit Champions For Hope
Disability Law Colorado
Disability Rights Arkansas
Disability Rights Center - NH
Disability Rights Michigan
Disability Rights New Jersey
Disability Rights North Carolina
Disability Rights South Carolina
Disability Rights TN
Early Learning Essentials
East Bay Housing Organizations
Economic Policy Institute
Education Reform Now
Empower Missouri
End Hunger Connecticut!
Endangered Species Coalition
Disability Law Center
Family Centered Treatment Foundation
Family Values @ Work
Feeding New York State
Feeding South Dakota
Feeding Texas
First Focus on Children
Florida Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Food for People
Food Helpers
Food Helpers/dba Gr. Washington County Food Bank
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Full Plates Full Potential
Georgia Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Georgians for a Healthy Future
Global Empowerment
Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger
Groundwork Collaborative
Guam Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Hawaii Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!
Health Care Voices
Healthcare Alternative Systems Inc (HAS)
Healthy Teen Network
HOUSING COALITION EDUCATION
Housing Opportunities of Fort Worth, Inc.
Hunger Free America
Hunger Free Colorado
Hunger Solutions Minnesota
Hunger-Free PA
Idaho Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force
Illinois Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Illinois Hunger Coalition
Impact Fund
Indiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Indivisible Marin
Indy Hunger Network
Information, Referral & Assistance
Iowa Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Iowa Hunger Coalition
Islamic Relief USA
Island Harvest Food Bank
Jefferson County Farmers Market
Jewish Family Service of Colorado
Johnson Park Center (JPC)
Just Future Project
Just Harvest
Justice in Aging
Kansas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Kentucky Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Knowledgepanel
Lafayette Urban Ministry
Learning Disabilities Association of Delaware
Lifting Up Westchester, Inc.
Little Listeners of the Carolinas
Los Angeles Regional Food Bank
Louisiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Lower Columbia CAP
Madison-area Urban Ministry d/b/a/ JustDane
Maine Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Maine People's Alliance
Mary House PA
Maryland Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Mass Alliance of HUD Tenants
Massachusetts Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
Meals on Wheels America
Meals on Wheels California
Meals on Wheels Diablo Region
Meals on Wheels OC
Meals on Wheels Texas
Meals on Wheels Western South Dakota
MEO
Mercer County Senior Citizen Center
Methodist Action Program
Metro New York Health Care for All
Metropolitan Tenants Organization
Michigan Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Mid-Ohio Food Collective
Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Mississippi Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Missouri Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
MomsRising
Montana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Alliance to End Homelessness
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
National Alopecia Areata Foundation
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Partnership (National PLACE)
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Community Action Partnership
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Jewish Women/ Cleveland
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Employment Law Project
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Health Law Program
National Immigration Law Center
National Juvenile Justice Network
National Organization for Women
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
National Respite Coalition
National WIC Association
National Women's Law Center
Nebraska Appleseed
Nebraska Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Neighbor to family
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Nevada Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Nevada NOW
New Hampshire Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
New Jersey Association on Correction
New Jersey Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
New Mexico Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
New York State Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
NH Hunger Solutions
North Carolina Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
North Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
North Dakota Protection & Advocacy Project
Northwest Harvest
Occupy Bergen County
Office of the Rev. Dr. Chuck Currie
Ohio Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Oklahoma Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Oregon Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Oregon Food Bank
Our Children Oregon
Our Revolution
Our Spring Lake Store, LLC
Pack Away Hunger
Partners for Our Children
Partnership for America's Children
Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
People's Action
Positive Vibes Plant Lounge LLC
Poverty Project at the Institute for Policy Studies
Project Bread
Project FEED
Protect All Children's Environment
Public Advocacy for Kids
Public Health Solutions
Public Justice Center
Puerto Rico Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Reaching Out Community Services
RESULTS
RESULTS, Bremerton, WA group
Rhode Island Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Rise and Resist healthcare Action Group
RocACTS Religious Leaders caucus
Sanctuary of Hope LA
Sisters of St. Joseph Healthcare Foundation
Society of General Internal Medicine
Sojourners
South Carolina Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
South Dakota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network
Spectrum Health Care
St. Lawrence County Community Development Program, Inc.
St. Mary Magdalene Social Justice and Peace Committee
Tennessee Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Texas Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
The Affordable Homes Group
The AIDS Institute
The Center for Youth and Family Solutions
The Invisible Americans Podcast
The Madison County Racial Justice Coalition
The National Domestic Violence Hotline
Treatment Action Group
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Hidalgo County Texas
United Way of King County
Utah Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
VA Hunger Solutions a project of Virginia Poverty Law Center
Vermont Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Virgin Islands Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Virginia Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Voices of Hope, Inc.
Wake Up World
Washington Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition
Washington Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Washington State Parent Ambassadors
West Chester Food Cupboard
West Virginia Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
West Virginians for Affordable Health Care
Westchester County Continuum of Care Partnership To End Homelessness
Windham Area Interfaith Ministry
Wisconsin Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Witnesses to Hunger New Haven
Worcester County Food Bank
Wyoming Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Yoga For Peace, Justice, Harmony With the Planet
York County Food Bank
Young Invincibles
(List in formation, will be growing and updated regularly)