

Tell Congress: STOP FEDERAL BUDGET CUTS TO THE HUNGRY AND UNINSURED

[August 31, 2005] BUDGET CALL-IN DAYS ---- SEPTEMBER 8 AND 9
CALL YOUR SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVE - 1-800-426-8073

On August 30, the U.S. Census Bureau released new data on poverty and health insurance. They found:

* 37 million people were living in poverty in the U.S. in 2004, a 1.1 million increase from the previous year. (The official 2004 poverty threshold is \$19,311 for a family of four.)

* 13 million children are living in poverty in the U.S. - nearly 1 in 5 children.

* The poverty rate increased in seven states (Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Wisconsin, and Missouri) and fell in three states (Arkansas, Hawaii, and Oklahoma).

* 45.8 million people were uninsured in 2004, an increase of 800,000 people since 2003. The uninsured rate remained constant at 15.7%, and the uninsured rate for children is 11.2%.

* Employment-based health insurance coverage fell 0.6 percentage points between 2003 and 2004, while Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program coverage increased 0.5 percentage points.

This September 8 and 9 - Pick Up the Phone to Stop Budget Cuts

When they return in September, members of Congress will consider cutting Medicaid and Food Stamps for the nation's most vulnerable. But they don't have to! Make sure they hear from YOU.

Spread the Word. Forward the alert below. Let's work together to generate thousands of phone calls to Congress on September 8 and 9. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has generously donated a toll-free line to connect advocates with their Senators and Representatives.

* Call Your Senators and Representative: 1-800-426-8073
Use this toll-free number (generously provided by the American Friends Service Committee) to be connected to the Capitol Switchboard on September 8 and 9. Find information about your Members of Congress at <http://capwiz.com/pcusa/dbq/officials/>. (If you are unable to call on 9/8 or 9/9, please call before September 15th. Call the Capitol switchboard at 1-202-224-3121 and ask to be connected with your Member of Congress.)

* Tell them:

o Please oppose reductions or eliminations of services in Medicaid, Food Stamps, TANF and other critical help for vulnerable people. (Such cutbacks are being considered as part of a budget reconciliation bill in September.)

o As a Presbyterian, I am concerned about the increasing numbers of people in poverty and uninsured. It is wrong to impose the biggest budget sacrifices on the sick, the poor, the elderly and children by cutting supports while expanding tax breaks for the wealthy.

BACKGROUND: By September 16, congressional committees have instructions to cut \$35 billion from mandatory programs. Medicaid, Food Stamps, Medicare, the Earned Income Tax Credit, TANF, and SSI for elderly and disabled are all mandatory

programs. Food Stamps is threatened. Medicaid could be cut by as much as \$10 billion.

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