

## **LAST CHANCE TO SAVE VITAL SERVICES**

ByCarolynn Race

[December 19] Early this morning, the House voted 212-206 to approve a nearly \$40 billion conference report for spending reductions to mandatory programs over five years. To see how your Representative voted, go to <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2005/roll670.xml>.

The agreement now stands or falls on the final vote in the Senate. The Senate may vote on the conference report (S 1932) as early as today. Call your Senators toll-free at 800-426-8073 and **URGE THEM NOT TO SUPPORT THE BUDGET RECONCILIATION SPENDING REDUCTION CONFERENCE REPORT.**

Although early reports suggested that the agreement left out most cuts hurting low-income people initially proposed by the House, that is NOT the case. Many harmful cuts in Medicaid, child support, foster care, SSI, TANF, and student loans remain in the agreement. No food stamp cuts were included in the conference report. The conference report also includes changes to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, with stringent new work requirements that the Congressional Budget Office estimates may cost state governments \$8.4 billion over the next five years to finance welfare-to-work programs to meet the new requirements. The conference report includes \$1 billion in additional child care funding over five years, which, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities notes is "\$7.4 billion less than CBO estimates to be the cost to states of meeting the new work requirements, and more than \$11 billion less than what states will need both to meet the new work requirements and to ensure that their current child care programs for low-income working families not on TANF do not have to be scaled back as a result of the impact of inflation on child care costs."

Call both your Senators today at 800-426-8073. Ask them not to reduce funding for vital programs that serve the most vulnerable among us. Remind them that cuts to vital human needs programs are not acceptable. Call on them to insist on a government that follows the ethical values of justice for the poor, welfare for children, hospitality to the stranger, and assistance to the disadvantaged.

--Carolynn Race

### General Assembly Policy:

The 207th General Assembly (1995) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) called on Congress "to defeat any proposals that base budget or deficit reductions primarily on the services provided to children, families, the needy, and the homeless" and urged strengthening of federal commitments to these groups. The Assembly also called on Congress "to insist on a government that follows ethical values of justice for the poor, welfare for children, hospitality to the stranger, and assistance to the disadvantaged." (Minutes, p. 718)

Published by the Stewardship of Public Life (SPL) advocacy program of the Washington Office, Presbyterian Church (USA), 100 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, D.C. 20002, (202) 543-1126, [www.pcusa.org/washington](http://www.pcusa.org/washington). For more information about the content of this article, please e-mail Carolynn Race at [crace@ctr.pcusa.org](mailto:crace@ctr.pcusa.org). If you are not a member of SPL but would like to be, please click [\[here\]](#).

