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**100 MINNESOTA NONPROFITS TELL CONGRESS TO STOP BUDGET RECONCILIATION BILL THAT CUTS NUTRITION AND HEALTH CARE, CUTS TAXES FOR WEALTHY, AND INCREASES DEFICIT**

ST. PAUL, MN (Oct. 8) -- A broad and diverse coalition of nearly 100 nonprofit organizations have signed on to a letter to Minnesota's Congressional delegation opposing budget reconciliation legislation which threatens to cut Food Stamps and Medicaid for low-income Americans while passing more tax cuts for wealthy Americans. The letter to Minnesota's senators and representatives is sponsored by the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, based in St. Paul.

According to the letter, "The current budget reconciliation process is not an effort to reduce the federal deficit in a fair and balanced manner. In fact, it would impose the heaviest burdens on those most in need – the poor, seniors, people with disabilities, people without access to health care – while offering yet more unjustifiable tax cuts for the wealthy."

Steve Francisco, Federal Budget Campaign Coordinator with the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, said "Congress is considering cutting Medicaid by \$10 billion and Food Stamps by possibly up to \$3 billion over the next five years. Such cuts would undoubtedly harm low-income Minnesotans." He noted that "one in nine Minnesotans receive health care funded through Medicaid, and over 253,000 Minnesotans receive Food Stamps (or Food Support as it is known in Minnesota) with benefits averaging less than \$1 per meal."

"At the same time that they would cut aid to the poor," said Francisco, "the budget reconciliation legislation includes \$70 billion in additional tax cuts that go to the wealthiest people in America and actually increases the size of the federal deficit."

The letter also notes the recent release of a new report on poverty in America, which finds that one in eight Americans, including millions of children, live in poverty. The letter states that "Weakening those programs that alleviate the worst effects of poverty and help families get on the path to self-sufficiency, especially when those programs are needed most, would not reflect American or Minnesota values."

The letter is signed by a coalition of religious, environmental, health care, housing, and human service nonprofit organizations from across the state.