



For Immediate Release

March 3, 2005

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Over 100 Minnesota Organizations call on Senators Dayton and Coleman to Oppose Large, Unfair Cuts in Federal Domestic Spending

A broad array of Minnesota advocacy groups, service providers, and faith-based organizations is calling on Senators Mark Dayton and Norm Coleman to resist major cuts in critical domestic programs proposed in President Bush's budget for next year.

107 groups signed on to a letter sent yesterday to Senators Dayton and Coleman urging them to support Minnesotans and oppose cuts in a host of programs – including education, health care, child care, energy assistance, Food Stamps, environmental protection, veterans' benefits, and many others.

"We write to express our deep concern about the impact of President Bush's proposed budget on the people of Minnesota, and to urge you to do all you can to ensure that the budget ultimately approved by Congress does not cause severe, long-term harm to Minnesota's communities and to the children, elderly, veterans, families, and businesses of our state," the letter states.

Under President Bush's proposed budget:

- State and local governments in Minnesota would lose nearly \$1 billion over five years in federal grants for a variety of programs – including Head Start, special education, and infant nutrition.
- Spending for health coverage for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and low-income working families in the Medicaid program would be cut of \$45 billion over the next decade.

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Such a cut would lead directly to a rollback in services offered in Minnesota and would likely force thousands of state residents from the program.

- Food Stamps would be cut by more than \$1 billion in Food Stamp spending over 10 years, which would mean an estimated 300,000 people nationally would lose this food support.

The letter calls on Minnesota's senators to oppose these large program cuts. It also asks them to oppose ill-conceived budget schemes such as block grants, entitlement caps, or global spending caps that will force significant cuts in critical services now and for many years in the future.

"The quality of life for everyone would decline because of these cuts," the letter states. "We cannot sustain the additional budget pressures that would result from the federal government stepping back from its commitments."

Among the groups endorsing the letter to Minnesota's senators are the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, Children's Defense Fund Minnesota, Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota, Minnesota Council of Churches, Minnesota Rural Education Association, and the Minnesota Senior Federation.

For more information, contact Nan Madden, Minnesota Budget Project Director, at 651-642-1904 ext. 230. The Minnesota Budget Project is an initiative of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. The letter and a fact sheet are available at www.mncn.org/bp/.

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