

October 11, 2005

Dear Representative/Senator:

On behalf of nonprofit organizations from across Minnesota, we want to thank you for the recent votes which you have cast to provide immediate short-term federal assistance to the survivors of Hurricane Katrina as they begin the long and difficult process of rebuilding their lives.

While Congress has moved promptly and appropriately to address a number of immediate human needs of the hurricane's survivors, we are increasingly concerned that Congress may soon act on budget reconciliation legislation which would, in fact, harm those same people and thousands of others in Minnesota who also are facing challenges in making ends meet.

**We strongly urge you to oppose budget reconciliation legislation that cuts important services while expanding tax cuts.**

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. This combination of spending cuts and tax cuts would actually increase the size of the federal deficit, not shrink it.

The spending cuts to be included in budget reconciliation include \$10 billion over five years for Medicaid and possibly up to \$3 billion in cuts to Food Stamps over the next five years. One in nine Minnesotans receive health care funded through Medicaid. Over 253,000 Minnesotans receive Food Stamps, with benefits averaging less than \$1 per meal. The Food Stamp program is vital in helping these Minnesotans meet their nutritional needs.

Both Medicaid and Food Stamps are currently meeting the needs of low-income Americans, including recently displaced survivors of the hurricane. Proposals earlier this year to cut these two vital programs were a bad idea then and would be unconscionable now, especially

considering that the tax portion of budget reconciliation includes up to \$70 billion in tax cuts for the wealthiest people in America. These additional tax cuts will significantly increase the projected federal deficit and will jeopardize the federal government's ability to meet its priorities in affordable housing, health care, jobs, nutrition, environmental protection, education, and more.

Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath have put poverty in America in the public spotlight. In 2004, one in eight Americans, including millions of children, lived in poverty. 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.

Your vote on budget reconciliation legislation is an expression of your vision and your values for our nation's future. By rejecting the flawed budget reconciliation process this year, Congress can chart a new course of fiscal responsibility and tax fairness, and show true concern for meeting the needs of the struggling members of our communities.

We look forward to working with you on these issues and look forward to your reply. If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact Steve Francisco, Federal Budget Campaign Coordinator, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, at [steve@mncn.org](mailto:steve@mncn.org) or by cell phone at 651-249-3806.

Sincerely,

Steve Francisco

Federal Budget Campaign Coordinator

on behalf of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and the following organizations:

Affirmative Options, St. Paul  
African Community Services, Minneapolis  
Alaska Coalition of Minnesota, Bloomington  
Alexandra House, Inc., Blaine  
American Public Information on the  
Environment, Northfield  
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, St. Paul  
AMICUS, Inc., Minneapolis  
Apple Tree Dental, Minneapolis  
ARC Southwestern Minnesota, Marshall  
Audubon Minnesota, St. Paul  
Brain Injury Association of Minnesota,  
Minneapolis  
Channel One Food Bank & Food Shelf,  
Rochester  
Children's Defense Fund of Minnesota, St. Paul  
Chisago County Human and Health Services,  
Center City

Communities for Responsible Energy/  
Environment Demonstrations (CREED),  
Minneapolis  
Conservation League of Edina, Edina  
Environmental Association for Great Lakes  
Education (EAGLE), Duluth  
Community Action Center of Northfield, Inc.,  
Northfield  
Community Emergency Assistance Program,  
Inc., Blaine  
Council of Asian Pacific Minnesotans, St. Paul  
Dads Make a Difference, St. Paul  
Damiano Center, Duluth  
Duluth Adult Learning, Duluth  
Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota, St. Paul  
Faith in Action, St. Mary of the Lake, White  
Bear Lake  
Families Moving Forward, Minneapolis  
Family & Children's Service (FCS), Minneapolis  
FamilyMeans, Stillwater

Family Tree Clinic, St. Paul  
Forest Lake Area Youth Service Bureau, Forest  
Lake  
Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Little Falls  
Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness,  
Minneapolis  
Girl Scout Council of Greater Minneapolis,  
Brooklyn Center  
Glesener's, Inc., Bird Island  
Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation,  
Minneapolis  
Hastings Family Service, Hastings  
HIRED, Minneapolis  
HOME Line, Minneapolis  
Hunger Solutions Minnesota, Arden Hills  
Intercongregation Communities Association,  
Minnetonka  
Jewish Community Action, St. Paul  
JOBS NOW Coalition, St. Paul  
Kids for Saving Earth, North Branch  
Land Stewardship Project, Minneapolis  
Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation,  
Hackensack  
Legal Services Advocacy Project of Minnesota,  
St. Paul  
Lifetrack Resources, St. Paul  
Life-Work Planning Center, Mankato  
Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, St. Paul  
Mankato Area Environmentalists, Mankato  
Mental Health Resources, Inc., St. Paul  
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable  
Housing, Minneapolis  
Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council,  
Minneapolis  
Minnesota AIDS Project, Minneapolis  
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy,  
St. Paul  
Minnesota Citizens for Tax Justice, St. Paul  
Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless,  
Minneapolis  
Minnesota Community Action Association, St.  
Paul  
Minnesota Conservation Federation, St. Paul  
Minnesota Housing Partnership/Housing  
Minnesota, St. Paul  
Minnesota NAHRO, Eagan  
Minnesota River Valley Audubon Chapter,  
Bloomington

Minnesota Social Service Association, St. Paul  
Mississippi Corridor Neighborhood Coalition,  
Minneapolis  
National Association of Social Workers  
Minnesota Chapter, St. Paul  
Neighbors, Inc., South St. Paul  
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness,  
Duluth  
Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul  
& Minneapolis, St. Paul  
Olmsted Community Action, Rochester  
People First of Redwood County, Redwood  
Falls  
Perspective Family Center, St. Louis Park  
Planned Parenthood Minnesota, N. Dakota, S.  
Dakota, St. Paul  
Project for Pride in Living, Inc., Minneapolis  
Project SOAR of Northeastern Minnesota,  
Duluth  
RESOURCE, Inc., Minneapolis  
Restart, Inc., Minneapolis  
Roseville Seniors at Home, Roseville  
Sandweiss & Associates, Minneapolis  
Sexual Assault Services for Aitkin County,  
Aitkin  
Simpson Housing Service, Inc., Minneapolis  
Southside Family School, Minneapolis  
Southside Services, Inc., Minneapolis  
Southwestern Center for Independent Living,  
Marshall  
St. John's University Campus Ministry,  
Collegeville  
St. Paul Area Council of Churches, St. Paul  
The Jeremiah Program, Minneapolis  
Twin Cities Area Chapter of ACES, Cottage  
Grove  
Twin Cities Chinese Counseling Center  
Twin Ports Area Nonprofit Coalition, Duluth  
United Steelworkers of America, District 11,  
Minneapolis  
West Central Industries, Inc., Willmar  
White Earth Community Council, White Earth  
Winona Senior Advocacy Program, Winona  
Women's Cancer Resource Center/Preventing  
Harm Minnesota, Minneapolis  
Women's Foundation of Minnesota, Minneapolis  
YWCA St. Paul, St. Paul