



**June 2009**

**An Open Letter to Governor Tim Pawlenty and Members of the Minnesota Legislature:**

The undersigned organizations are deeply concerned about the Governor's proposal to reduce the Renters' Credit. These cuts will harm Minnesotans across the state including seniors, persons with disabilities, and other low- and moderate-income Minnesotans.

The Renters' Credit provides a reduction in property taxes to Minnesotans whose rent is high relative to their income. While renters do not pay property taxes directly, the Renters' Credit recognizes that owners of rental property pass on the cost of property taxes to renters in the form of higher rents.

- In 2006, more than 274,000 Minnesota households received this tax credit. 28% of these households included seniors and/or persons with severe disabilities.
- More than \$150 million was brought into local communities and businesses because of the Renters' Credit.

Under the Governor's proposal, the Renters' Credit would be cut by 27%. The average credit would be cut by over \$100.

The Governor claims that a cut to the Renters' Credit is appropriate since property taxes were decreased in 2001 for most apartment owners. Renters did not benefit from this property tax reform; the savings have not been passed on to renters.

Even when the Renters' Credit is taken into account, rental property taxes remain one of the most regressive taxes in Minnesota.

At a time when the state faces an economic downturn and a significant lack of affordable housing, renters in Minnesota cannot afford a 27% cut in the Renters' Credit. Many Minnesotans use the Renters' Credit to meet basic needs such as delayed dental care, school clothes and supplies, car repairs, bills, and prescription drugs. Cutting the Renters' Credit harms Minnesota families. We need to stop asking our most vulnerable Minnesotans to bear much of the costs of balancing the state's budget.

**We, the undersigned organizations, therefore oppose a cut to the Renters' Credit.**

AccountAbility Minnesota, St. Paul  
Affirmative Options Coalition, St. Paul  
Alexandra House, Inc., Blaine  
All Parks Alliance for Change, St. Paul  
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, Minneapolis  
Amicus, Minneapolis  
Anna Marie's Alliance, St. Cloud  
Arc of Minnesota, St. Paul  
Atrium Resident Organization, Minneapolis  
Attridge Properties, Minneapolis  
Barbara Schneider Foundation, Minneapolis  
Basic Needs Incorporated of South Washington  
County, St. Paul Park  
Bi-County CAP, Inc., Bemidji

BIHA Women in Action, Minneapolis  
Cabrini Partnership, Minneapolis  
Camp Fire USA -- Minnesota Council, St. Paul  
Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Cloud  
Centre for Asians and Pacific Islanders,  
Minneapolis  
Child Care WORKS, Minneapolis  
Children's Dental Services, Minneapolis  
Chisago County Senior Center, North Branch  
Chisago Lakes Achievement Center, Chisago  
City  
Clare Housing, Minneapolis  
Committee Against Domestic Abuse, Mankato  
CommonBond Communities, St. Paul

Community Action Duluth, Duluth  
Community Action Partnership of Ramsey &  
Washington Counties, St. Paul  
Community Involvement Programs, Minneapolis  
Community Resource Connections, Inc., Bemidji  
Cornerstone Advocacy Services,  
Crookston Housing & Economic Dev. Authority,  
Crookston  
Dads Make a Difference, St. Paul  
Dakota Woodlands, Eagan  
Deer River Hired Hands, Inc., Deer River  
Domestic Abuse Project, Minneapolis  
Drug Free Coalition North Central Minnesota,  
Bemidji  
East Hillside, Duluth  
Elder Circle, Grand Rapids  
Families Moving Forward, Minneapolis  
Family & Children's Service, Minneapolis  
Franklin Tower Resident Council, Minneapolis  
Friends Against Abuse, International Falls  
Growth & Justice, St. Paul  
Hastings Family Service, Hastings  
Holland Highrise Resident Council, Minneapolis  
HomeLine, Minneapolis  
Housing Coalition of St. Cloud Area, St. Cloud  
Hunger Solutions Minnesota, St. Paul  
Huttner's Sober Style of Living, Minneapolis  
Jewish Community Action, St. Paul  
Jewish Family & Children's Service of  
Minneapolis, Minnetonka  
Jewish Vocational Service, Minneapolis  
JOBS NOW Coalition, St. Paul  
Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, Minneapolis  
KOOTASCA Community Action, Inc., Grand  
Rapids  
Lake County Developmental Achievement  
Center, Knife River  
League of Women Voters Minnesota, St. Paul  
Legal Services Advocacy Project, St. Paul  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Duluth  
Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, St. Paul  
Mary Ann Young Senior Center, Blaine  
Meeker County Emergency Food Shelf,  
Litchfield  
Merrick Community Services, St. Paul  
Metropolitan Consortium of Community  
Developers, Minneapolis  
MICAH, Minneapolis  
Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council,  
Minneapolis  
Minneapolis Urban League, Minneapolis  
Minnesota Citizens Federation - Northeast  
Community Action Duluth, Duluth  
Minnesota Citizens for Tax Justice, St. Paul  
Minnesota Community Action Partnership, St.  
Paul  
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, St. Paul

Minnesota Disability Law Center, Minneapolis  
Minnesota Elder Economic Security Initiative, St.  
Paul  
Minnesota Housing Partnership, St. Paul  
Minnesota Senior Federation, St. Paul  
Minnesota Tenants Alliance,  
Minnesota Tenants Union, Minneapolis  
Minnesota Women's Consortium, St. Paul  
National Association of Social Workers,  
Minnesota Chapter, St. Paul  
National Council of Jewish Women, Minnetonka  
National Lawyers Guild -- Minnesota Chapter,  
Minneapolis  
Northwest Community Action, Badger  
Northwoods Coalition for Family Safety, Bemidji  
Parmly Lakeview Apartments, Chisago City  
Phyllis Wheatley Community Center,  
Minneapolis  
Pillsbury United Communities, Minneapolis  
Prayer for Peace Group, Laporte  
Rainbow Residents Council, Minneapolis  
Residents for Affordable Housing, Minneapolis  
RESOURCE, Minneapolis  
Restart, Inc., Golden Valley  
Rise, Inc., Milaca  
Riverton Community Housing, Minneapolis  
Sabathani Community Center, Inc., Minneapolis  
SEIU Minnesota State Council, St. Paul  
Senior Advocacy Program, Winona  
Sojourner Project, Hopkins  
St. Stephen's Human Services, Minneapolis  
St. Stephen's Street Outreach, Minneapolis  
STEP, St. Louis Park  
The ALS Association, Minnesota Chapter,  
Minneapolis  
The City, Inc., Minneapolis  
Theresa House, Inc., Mankato  
Tri-Cap, St. Cloud  
Twin Cities Gray Panthers, Minneapolis  
Twin Cities Housing Development Corporation,  
St. Paul  
Twin City Christian Homes, Richfield  
Union Gospel Mission, St. Paul  
United Way of Central Minnesota, St. Cloud  
United Way of Olmsted County, Rochester  
Vail Place, Hopkins  
Way to Grow, Minneapolis  
Wayside House, St. Louis Park  
WCI Joblink, Willmar  
West 7th Community Center, St. Paul  
West Central Minnesota Housing Partnership,  
Pelican Rapids  
Wingspan Life Resources, St. Paul  
Women Against Military Madness, Minneapolis  
Women Planting Seeds, Minneapolis  
Youth Venture, Minneapolis  
YWCA of St. Paul, St. Paul