

Taking Action...

making a difference for hungry people!

We are in an extraordinarily hopeful moment that calls us to join with others in support of efforts to alleviate hunger and extreme poverty. We can already see evidence of lobbyists for other special interests working overtime to fund their own priorities (and pull money away from priorities like development aid). Still, if we do our part, we have a good chance of achieving important progress.

So take a few minutes and e-mail, call, or write a post card or note to your members of Congress. Urge them to:

1. Restore the \$4 billion cut from International Affairs in the Senate Budget Committee markup for the 2011 Budget Resolution. These cuts seriously undermine long overdue expansions to U.S. global development efforts – efforts that address a key root cause of conflict in the world today.
2. Strengthen U.S. development aid, e.g. by emphasizing the role of women in addressing extreme poverty and hunger. Both Congress and Pres. Obama have offered encouraging initiatives to do this. While some elements are troubling (like the place of genetically modified crops), we are closer than we have ever been to forging a comprehensive, smart, and workable strategy for global food security.
3. Place reaching the Millennium Development Goals at the heart of our nation's efforts to help the poorest of the poor.

The past few years have shown how modest increases in aid from countries like ours can make a big difference. For example, 19 million children in Africa are going to school who would not have without the changes we helped bring about this decade. The price tag for what we want is about equal to a week's cost of the Iraq war. And we can help make it happen with just 10 minutes of our time. This update contains all we need to do our part to make it happen.

Tips on contacting an elected official: Many people only rarely e-mail or write their elected officials because they find it intimidating, or wonder if it makes any difference. But if we don't, our point of view will be undercounted. *The solution:* A simple 4 to 6 sentence note, e-mail, or postcard, written in 8 to 10 minutes. Begin by thinking about what approach might be most helpful to your particular

member of Congress (e.g. thanks for any past leadership). Center your note on what you want your official to do. Add a reason or two and perhaps a statistic. State clearly what you want and ask for a response. If you get inspired and write more, OK. But brief is just fine! The main thing is to get it in the mailbox!

Examples of notes to elected officials:

Dear Senator Smith,

Members of our church are discussing the economic crisis and ways government might help at home and abroad. It is clearly time to significantly expand funding for U.S. development efforts. Thus I was disappointed to see that the Senate budget resolution markup cuts \$4 billion from the President's budget proposal.

I would also like to see you work to strengthen the programs that address hunger and extreme poverty e.g. by harnessing the power of women to drive appropriate development.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely, Mary L. Public

Dear Representative Jones,

The continuing wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere remind us that military options have grave limits in solving conflicts. Thus, I was dismayed to see huge increases for military programs and a \$4 billion cut from International Affairs in the Senate Budget Committee budget resolution markup. Programs that address extreme poverty and hunger are important not just for humanitarian reasons; they also address key underlying causes of conflict in the world.

I hope that you will work to contain military spending and expand programs that reduce violence in the world. Specifically, retain the Obama budget's funding level for international affairs. And use the principles of H.R. 2139, S.1524, and PSD-7 to make development aid more efficient, effective, and accountable. Thank you for your efforts; I'd like to hear what you're doing on these concerns.

Your constituent, John Q. Citizen

Make the most of your note: Send it to other members of Congress... Send it to a local newspaper! (Even if your letter isn't chosen it can help another on the issue get printed.) And send us a copy: lpf@ecunet.org LPF, 1710 11th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122. For more information: www.lutheranpeace.org www.bread.org www.interaction.org