

FOR THE RECORD – The Truth about CCHD Funding

You may already know of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the anti-poverty and social justice program of the Catholic bishops in the United States for almost forty years now. Recently, you may have heard allegations CCHD promotes or supports projects whose work is not consistent with Catholic teaching, or even is actively contrary to Catholic teaching. We would like to set the record straight, by specifically addressing here some of the allegations you may have encountered lately.

ALLEGATION: CCHD persistently funds organizations closely associated with the pro-abortion movement.

FACT: The Catholic Campaign for Human Development fully upholds our Church's teaching on the sanctity of human life from conception through natural death. The Campaign funds projects that empower the poor and help them organize themselves to move out of poverty. All grant applicants are carefully screened and funds are provided only to projects with objectives and actions that are fully in accord with the moral teaching of the Catholic Church. The local CCHD diocesan director and national grants staff evaluate every proposal. Every project recommended for funding requires endorsement by the local bishop.

The funding criteria, including the fact that projects must be in conformity with the moral guidelines of the Catholic Church, are specified from the earliest stages of the application process. Projects are monitored through regular reporting and on-site visits. Funding is discontinued if projects deviate from their initial objective into areas inconsistent with the moral teaching of the Catholic Church.

The importance of upholding the Church's moral teaching in funding worthwhile projects was codified in guidelines unanimously approved in 1972 by the Administrative Board of bishops of the United States Catholic Conference. In March 1999, that same body unanimously approved revised guidelines which do not differ in substance from the earlier ones, but make explicit the principles upon which the Campaign is founded, and offer specific guidance for assessing funding applications in light of the complexities of present-day social development efforts.

The guidelines clearly state:

Central to all Catholic moral teaching is the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death. The Catholic Campaign for Human Development will consider favorably only those applications which demonstrate respect for the dignity of the human person. CCHD will not consider applications from organizations which promote or support abortion, euthanasia, the death penalty, or any other affront to human life and dignity.

CCHD funds will be used to support organizations that conform to Catholic teaching. These funds must be applied exclusively to support the effort approved for funding.

CCHD funds will not be used to support any application which is sponsored or promoted by an organization whose primary or substantial thrust is contrary to Catholic teaching, even if the application itself is in accord with Catholic teaching.

With all CCHD requests, the local diocesan bishop will be consulted with regard to the advisability of such funding by CCHD.

CCHD requires applicants to adhere, in the administration of the funded project, to those basic principles which are central to CCHD's Catholic Mission.

ALLEGATION: CCHD project funds are “fungible”: they free up monies for organizations to spend on other activities at variance with Catholic teaching.

FACT: CCHD maintains strict financial control of project funds. Organizations must deposit grant monies in a separate bank account which includes CCHD in its title. Expenditures authorized by the approved CCHD budget must be met with funds drawn directly from the CCHD account and separate ledgers must be kept for CCHD funds.

CCHD grants are awarded annually upon the submission of a detailed budget. Organizations are eligible for a maximum of six years in succession of funding. Grants are disbursed, only after receipt of a satisfactory narrative and a detailed financial report.

CCHD-funded projects are monitored through regular reporting and on-site visits. Funding is discontinued if projects deviate from their initial objectives into areas inconsistent with the moral teaching of the Catholic Church.

ALLEGATION: The Catholic Campaign for Human Development does not fund direct service to the poor, and is therefore not worthy of designation as a Catholic charity.

FACT: The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is a charitable organization of the nation's Catholic bishops. Since its inception in 1970, CCHD's goal has been to help poor people achieve self-sufficiency. The bishops intended CCHD to complement the direct-assistance mission of Catholic Charities agencies and other emergency relief programs run by the Church.

Responding to Pope Paul VI's admonition to "break the hellish cycle of poverty," the bishops began CCHD with the belief that "organized groups of white and minority poor could develop economic and social strength to eradicate the conditions which impose poverty and trap successive generations in an unbroken loop of dependency and despair."

In creating CCHD, the bishops specified their second major goal for the organization was educational. They wrote, "The poor have not chosen poverty. Poverty is the result of circumstances over which the poor have little or no control. We hope through CCHD to impress these facts on the non-poor and to effect in them a conversion of heart, a growth in compassion and sensitivity to the needs of their brothers in want." The

bishops were hopeful that more affluent Catholics would support poor people's efforts for self-determination.

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is the nation's largest private funder of self-help groups for the poor. It has distributed more than \$400 million in grants to more than 4,000 community groups throughout the United States. An independent study conducted at The Catholic University of America in 1994 concluded CCHD has funded projects that have affected fully half of America's poor.

Pope John Paul II repeatedly expressed support for CCHD. In a message to mark CCHD's 25th anniversary in 1995, he "[gave] thanks for the fruits of justice and solidarity which have taken root in communities throughout the United States during the past quarter century as a result of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. Through the wide variety of initiatives promoted by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development local communities and groups at all levels have found encouragement and support in their efforts to overcome poverty and to foster the growth of solidarity, social justice and peace."

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is a nationwide effort, with donations from and projects in Catholic dioceses throughout the country. It enjoys the warm support of Church officials, including pastors and bishops. Its efforts give the poor the tools they need to overcome their own poverty.

ALLEGATION: The Catholic Campaign for Human Development funded seven California groups, whose participation in a larger coalition that was not funded by CCHD, Mobilize the Immigrant Vote, indicates their support for activities not in keeping with Church teaching.

FACT: CCHD only funds organizations that are in accord with the moral and social teaching of the Church. With reference to the seven California groups that were listed as members of Mobilize the Immigrant Vote (MIV), only six are currently funded by CCHD. For each of the six funded groups, CCHD received specific approval from the bishop of each local diocese in which the organizations are located to fund them. All six groups confirmed to CCHD they were never consulted about MIV taking positions on ballot initiatives contrary to Catholic social teaching. Additionally, the Mobilize the Immigrant Vote Web site includes this statement: "The partner organizations listed above do not necessarily endorse MIV's formal positions on ballot measures or policy proposals." In fact, Coalition LA, one of the six groups, produces its own voter guide which is approved by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles prior to publication.

ALLEGATION: The Catholic Campaign for Human Development funded LA CAN and the San Francisco Organizing Project, which promoted activity contrary to Church teaching.

FACT: The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has reviewed the activity of LA CAN and determined the organization does not engage in any activity contrary to Church teaching, and has recommended continued funding for the organization. The

Archdiocese of San Francisco strongly supports the work of the San Francisco Organizing Project (SFOP) to expand access to health care to children. Both Archbishop Levada and Archbishop Niederauer have spoken at SFOP events; SFOP has met regularly with Archdiocesan staff to coordinate work on health care access and other issues that affect the poor and immigrant families.

ALLEGATION: The Catholic Campaign for Human Development funded Young Workers United and the Chinese Progressive Association, both of whom produced voter guides which took a position contrary to Church teaching.

FACT: After a joint investigation with the Archdiocese of San Francisco, CCHD determined both organizations in question had in fact produced voter guides that included positions contrary to Church teaching. CCHD immediately cancelled both grants, and both organizations returned all of the funding they received from CCHD.

ALLEGATION: The Catholic Campaign for Human Development funded Prebel Street and the Women’s Community Revitalization Project, both of whom are involved in activity contrary to Church teaching.

FACT: The Diocese of Portland and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, along with CCHD, continue to gather the facts involving these organizations. Both grants have been placed on hold during this process. Once all pertinent information has been reviewed, a final determination will be made regarding these two organizations.

For more information on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, visit www.usccb.org/cchd .

