



A Catholic Campaign Against Global Poverty



Take Action!

June 5, 2006

URGE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO SUPPORT FOREIGN AID; REJECT ATTEMPTS TO CUT INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS THAT HELP THE POOR

TAKE ACTION NOW! Please call your Representative today or visit the CRS Action Center (<http://actioncenter.crs.org>) to urge him or her to protect lifesaving international assistance programs when the full House votes on the FY 2007 foreign operations appropriations bill this week.

WHY THIS ISSUE IS IMPORTANT: The House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on the FY 2007 foreign operations appropriations bill that includes funding for life-saving programs such as improving mother and child health, education, agriculture and HIV/AIDS programs.

The House bill currently provides \$3.4 billion to fight global HIV/AIDS, including nearly \$2.8 for the Presidential Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) that provides treatment and care for HIV/AIDS-affected people in the hardest hit regions of the world and \$2 billion for the Millennium Challenge Account that is helping poor countries combat poverty and promote economic development. Meanwhile, core humanitarian and development programs that fund projects such as education and agriculture are still nearly \$220 million below FY 2006 levels.

While funding levels for all accounts are less than what the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) have been supporting, we are concerned that there may be further attempts to cut international assistance programs when the House of Representatives debates the bill later this week. The poor cannot afford cuts to our foreign aid budget.

WHY WE SHOULD GET INVOLVED: In support of our mission to follow the Gospel's call to alleviate human suffering and promote justice, CRS and the USCCB are promoting a *Catholic Campaign Against Global Poverty* (www.usccb.org/globalpoverty). Our Campaign is rooted in our Church's teaching to uphold human dignity, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable people around the world.

In testimony before the House Appropriations Committee earlier this year, USCCB and CRS noted that:
Severe poverty assaults the human dignity of millions of people in many regions and nations. Our religious faith and our nation's values tell us that the moral measure of our efforts is how we respond to the "least among us" (Mt. 25:40) and whether we seek justice for all. Investments in human development are not only matters of moral responsibility, but contribute to a safer and more just and peaceful world.

USCCB and CRS urge members of the House of Representatives to ensure that international humanitarian and development assistance programs are protected when they vote on the FY 2007 foreign operations appropriations bill.

Note: As the debate approaches, USCCB and CRS will alert advocates about further developments that may need action to protect vital foreign assistance funding to aid poor persons in developing countries.

For more information, contact:

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