



Committee on International Justice and Peace

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3160

WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG/JPHD • FAX 202-541-3339

October 7, 2011

Honorable Senator Patty Murray
Co-Chair, Joint Select Committee
United States Congress
Washington, DC

Honorable Representative Jeb Hensarling
Co-Chair, Joint Select Committee
United States Congress
Washington, DC

Dear Senator Murray and Representative Hensarling:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) we write to offer you our encouragement and support as you work to put our nation's fiscal house in order in ways that avoid morally unacceptable, potentially deadly cuts to poor and vulnerable people at home and abroad, especially to poverty-focused international humanitarian and development assistance.

The USCCB has repeatedly acknowledged the difficult challenges that Congress faces to get the nation's financial house in order: fulfilling the demands of justice and obligations to future generations; controlling future debt and deficits; and protecting the life and dignity of those who are poor and vulnerable. However, our nation must be fiscally responsible in morally responsible ways.

Poverty-focused humanitarian and development assistance programs offer much needed agricultural support for subsistence farmers, adaptation to climate change for vulnerable communities, medicines for people living with HIV/AIDS and vaccines for preventable diseases, assistance to orphans and vulnerable children, disaster assistance in places like Haiti, peacekeeping to protect innocent civilians in troubled areas such as Sudan and the Congo, and support to migrants and refugees fleeing conflict or persecution in nations such as Iraq. The famine in East Africa is a grim reminder of the lives that are at stake. (See attached list for the poverty-focused humanitarian and development programs supported by the USCCB.)

We acknowledge that the deficit must be reduced, but we urge you to consider balanced adjustments across the entire federal budget, including defense, revenue, agricultural subsidies, and fair and just entitlement reform. If the State and Foreign Operations budget must be cut, then protect critical poverty-focused development and humanitarian accounts and other parts of the budget focused on the poor. The budget is a moral document that should give priority to those who are poor and vulnerable at home and abroad.

As we have said in the past, the USCCB stands ready to work with leaders of both parties for a budget that reduces future deficits, protects poor and vulnerable people at home and abroad, advances the common good, and promotes human life and dignity. But we oppose approaches that place a disproportionate, deadly burden on the poorest people in the poorest places on earth. We urge the Joint Select Committee to reject the disproportionate, unwise, and unjust cuts to poverty-focused international assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard
Bishop of Albany
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace

Encl.



**POVERTY-FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT
and HUMANITARIAN ACCOUNTS
SUPPORTED BY USCCB and CRS**



<u>FUNDING ACCOUNT TITLE (\$ in thousands)</u>	<u>FY 2010¹</u>	<u>FY 2011²</u>	<u>House FY 2012³</u>	<u>House FY10-12 % Diff</u>	<u>Senate Proposed FY 2012</u>
Child Survival and Maternal Health (including vaccines)	549,000	unknown	unknown	~ -8%	595,000
Vulnerable Children (orphans and displaced children)	15,000	unknown	unknown	~ -8%	17,500
HIV/AIDS (USAID Programs)	350,000	unknown	unknown	~ -8%	350,000
Other Infectious Diseases (neglected tropical diseases)	981,000	unknown	unknown	~ -8%	1,015,000
Global Health and Child Survival (includes PEPFAR)	5,359,000	5,334,310	unknown	~ -8%	5,250,000
Development Assistance (e.g. Feed the Future, climate change)	2,520,000	2,518,950	2,068,000	-18%	2,550,000
International Disaster Assistance	1,305,000	863,270	757,652	-42%	1,000,000
Transition Initiatives (post-conflict countries)	55,000	54,890	54,890	-0%	58,500
Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA)	1,850,000	1,686,620	1,496,873	-19%	1,800,000
Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance	45,000	49,000	32,000	-29%	(in MRA)
Millennium Challenge Account (development projects)	1,105,000	898,200	898,200	-19%	898,200
P.L. 480 Title II Food for Peace	1,840,000	1,497,000	1,040,198	-43%	1,562,000
McGovern-Dole International Food for Education	209,500	199,101	180,000	-14%	188,000
Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities	2,221,500	1,883,931	1,690,517	-24%	1,917,900
Peacekeeping Operations	331,500	304,390	304,390	-8%	292,000
International Development Association (including debt relief)	1,334,500	1,232,530	940,500	-30%	1,355,000
Debt Restructuring	60,000	49,900	unknown	-17%	15,000
TOTAL	\$ 20,131,000	-8%	-13%	-20%	18,864,100

(about 0.6% of budget)

¹ FY 2010 Enacted Budget including Supplemental

² FY 2011 Enacted Budget. Unknown sub-accounts flat-funded in FY 2011.

³ FY 2012 House State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Subcommittee proposal. Unknown sub-accounts cut on average 8%.