



Sisters of the Good Shepherd

The National  
Advocacy Center

March 26, 2007

Dear Representative,

As the House prepares to consider its FY 2008 budget resolution, the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd urges you to make the funding of critical human needs and investments in the common good the top priority for this year's budget. We hope that you will support H.Con.Res.99 as an important first step in restoring our national commitment to both fiscal and social responsibility, work to provide additional funding to restore lost services, and reject any amendments that would jeopardize these needed investments.

Over the past several years the National Advocacy Center has consistently advocated for budgets grounded in shared values that prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable, promote the common good and human dignity, and invest in peace and reconciliation both at home and abroad. We speak from the perspective of Good Shepherd agencies and communities throughout the country struggling to provide needed services to survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking, disadvantaged youth, individuals seeking education and training to improve their lives, and families seeking various kinds of support. This perspective makes us appreciative of the House Budget Committee's efforts to move away from the misguided priorities of the recent past and again included in the current Administration budget proposal. H.Con.Res.99 begins to restore balance to the federal budget and provides an important opportunity to begin rebuilding our nation's tattered safety net.

In particular, the National Advocacy Center applauds the inclusion of \$50 billion in new spending for the State Children's Health Insurance Program. This will help support a strong reauthorization of SCHIP and significantly reduce the number of uninsured children, though it may be insufficient to cover all kids, which we believe should be the goal of reauthorization. The resolution also provides \$20 billion for farm bill reauthorization that should be used help improve the Food Stamp program and it would help establish an affordable housing fund. **The National Advocacy Center strongly supports these investments and urges the House to preserve funding for these critical priorities.**

In addition, the National Advocacy Center is pleased that H.Con.Res.99 rejects the cuts proposed by the President and provides a much needed increase in domestic discretionary spending. This modest increase will begin to restore some of the services (housing assistance, child care subsidies, mental health care, youth development, education and job training) that have been lost over the past several years and to fulfill some of our promises of humanitarian assistance to the international community. However, this increase is only a first step toward a renewed commitment to a broader vision of security and to the common good. We are disappointed, for example, that military spending continues to increase unchallenged and, during this time of fiscal strain, we find the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower particularly appropriate, "*Every*

*gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.”* **It is critical that the House reject any amendments to reduce domestic discretionary funding and work to provide additional funding for critical social services as the budget process moves forward.**

Reflecting on the difficult choices that Congress faces, our faith reminds us that another world is always possible when leaders are guided by the best of our shared values. The House budget resolution begins to point us in the right direction, but further moral leadership is needed to ensure more balanced priorities to provide opportunity and economic security for all Americans. The National Advocacy Center urges you to reject amendments to reduce funding for critical human needs or to exempt taxes from budget discipline. We hope that the House will build on the progress made by the Budget Committee toward the right priorities and we look forward to working with you as the budget process moves forward.

Sincerely,

Alison L. Prevost, *Lobbyist*

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Sisters of the Good Shepherd

The National  
Advocacy Center

March 21, 2007

Dear Senator,

As the debate on the FY 2008 budget resolution begins in the Senate, the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd urges you to make the funding of critical human needs and investments in the common good the top priority for this year's budget. We hope that you will support *at least* the level of funding provided in the resolution passed by the budget committee, work to provide additional funding to restore lost services, and reject any amendments that would jeopardize these needed investments.

Over the past several years the National Advocacy Center has consistently advocated for budgets grounded in shared values that prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable, promote the common good and human dignity, and invest in peace and reconciliation both at home and abroad. We speak from the perspective of Good Shepherd agencies and communities throughout the country struggling to provide needed services to survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking, disadvantaged youth, individuals seeking education and training to improve their lives, and families seeking various kinds of support. This perspective makes us appreciative of the Senate Budget Committee's efforts to move away from the misguided priorities of the recent past and again in the current Administration budget proposal. S.Con.Res. 21 begins to restore balance to the federal budget and provides an important opportunity to begin rebuilding our nation's tattered safety net.

In particular, the National Advocacy Center applauds the inclusion of \$50 billion in new spending for the State Children's Health Insurance Program. This will help support a strong reauthorization of SCHIP and significantly reduce the number of uninsured children, though it may be insufficient to cover all kids, which we believe should be the goal of reauthorization. The resolution also allows new spending on child care, provides \$15 billion for farm bill reauthorization that should help improve the Food Stamp program, and would help establish an affordable housing fund. **The National Advocacy Center strongly supports these investments and urges the Senate to preserve funding for these critical priorities.**

In addition, the National Advocacy Center is pleased that S.Con.Res. 21 rejects the cuts proposed by the President and provides a much needed increase in domestic discretionary spending. This modest increase will begin to restore *some* of the services (housing assistance, child care subsidies, mental health care, youth development, education and job training) that have been lost over the past several years and to fulfill some of our promises of humanitarian assistance to the international community. However, this increase is only a first step toward a renewed commitment to a broader vision of security and to the common good. We are disappointed, for example, that military spending continues to increase unchallenged and during this time of fiscal strain find the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower particularly appropriate, "*Every gun*

*that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.”* **It is critical that the Senate reject any amendments to reduce domestic discretionary funding and work to provide additional funding for critical social services as the budget process moves forward.**

Finally, the National Advocacy Center appreciates the balanced approach of the budget resolution toward restoring fiscal responsibility. The sensible pay-as-you-go rule is critical to restoring fairness to the tax system and ensuring that vital common-good investments can be made. Low-income families and other vulnerable populations should not bear the burden of past fiscal irresponsibility. **The National Advocacy Center urges Senators to reject amendments that would weaken PAY-GO or exempt any tax cuts from this needed fiscal discipline.**

Reflecting on the difficult choices that Congress faces, our faith reminds us that another world is always possible when leaders are guided by the best of our shared values. The Senate budget resolution begins to point us in the right direction, but further moral leadership is needed to ensure more balanced priorities to provide opportunity and economic security for all Americans. The National Advocacy Center urges you again to reject amendments to reduce funding for critical human needs or to exempt taxes from budget discipline. We hope that the Senate will build on the progress made by the Budget Committee toward the right priorities and we look forward to working with you as the budget process moves forward.

Sincerely,

Alison L. Prevost, *Lobbyist*