



Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
The National  
Advocacy Center

March 20, 2007

Dear House Budget Committee Members,

As the Budget Committee begins its mark-up of the FY2008 budget resolution, the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd calls on you to support a budget that is grounded in a commitment to the common good and seeks not only to restore fiscal balance, but will also establish more balanced priorities to provide opportunity and economic security for all Americans. We look forward to working with the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress to increase investments in critical human needs and ensure that our nation's prosperity is justly shared.

Guided by Gospel values, Catholic social teaching, and the Good Shepherd mission of mercy and reconciliation, the National Advocacy Center has been a strong critic of the Administration's budget priorities and the budget resolutions that have passed Congress in recent years. We have repeatedly spoken out against unbalanced tax cuts and unquestioned military spending that have been used to justify deep cuts in human services—the effects of which we have witnessed in both the macro, with growing poverty and inequality, and the micro, with our own programs unable to sustain services much less meet growing needs. While we understand the fiscal constraints Congress faces, much work needs to be done in the FY2008 budget to restore services that have been lost and begin reaching more of those who have yet to share in recent economic growth.

The National Advocacy Center strongly supports an overall increase in funding, particularly a significant increase in domestic discretionary spending—even above the increase in the Senate budget resolution. Feedback from Good Shepherd agencies throughout the country has led us to prioritize certain areas. Specifically, we urge Congress to:

- ❖ Provide enough funding for SCHIP in the budget resolution to cover all of the nation's 9 million uninsured children;
- ❖ Provide sufficient discretionary funding to:
  - Restore cuts that have been made to housing programs over the past 5 years and to support new incremental vouchers for the Section 8 housing program;
  - Fully fund child welfare, juvenile justice, and VAWA programs—Targeted investments in these programs, particularly ones geared toward prevention, youth development, and housing/education;
  - Fully fund domestic and international programs to combat human trafficking and assist survivors, and provide promised investments in global health and humanitarian initiatives.

These critical, common-good investments will not be possible without the restoration of a more just and equitable tax structure and without serious scrutiny given to wasteful military spending. Low-income families and other vulnerable populations should not bear the burden of past fiscal irresponsibility.

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 National Advocacy Center calls on the House Budget Committee to demonstrate this needed moral leadership by making human needs a priority in the FY2008 budget and by increasing investments in programs that build up our national community and expand opportunity and prosperity for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Alison L. Prevost, *Lobbyist*

Sr. Gayle Lwanga Crumbley, RGS, *National Coordinator*