



Catholic Charities

SOCIAL CONCERNS • PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY

L.E.G.

Alert

Legislative Education Group (L.E.G.)

SERVING MARYLAND'S VULNERABLE POPULATIONS FOR OVER 30 YEARS

March 2009

SUSTAIN HUMAN SERVICES

Dear L.E.G. Member:

As the nation and State fall deeper into a recession, you can encourage the Governor and General Assembly to sustain and strengthen services to people in need. The General Assembly and the Governor are working to develop a plan to use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act dollars and to finalize the budget for the 2010 Fiscal Year. As critical decisions are being made during these very difficult economic times, your input is essential to help preserve and fortify services to vulnerable Marylanders, including at risk children and those living on a low income.

Please encourage our State elected officials to:

- Provide adequate staffing and lift the hiring freeze for the Department of Human Resources so the many people seeking services can receive them in a timely manner.
- Support adequate funding of critical social service programs, such as Temporary Cash Assistance, the Temporary Disability Assistance Program, and foster care.
- Support adequate funding for energy assistance AND low-income energy efficiency programs to reduce the need for energy assistance and create jobs.
- Restore the State funding formula for children with severe disabilities to attend nonpublic special education programs.

A "Sample Alert Letter" is enclosed to assist in your letter writing.

With Governor O'Malley and the General Assembly addressing the State's deficit and working to balance the budget, your response **NOW** will help prepare legislators and the Governor to make difficult decisions. **It is inevitable that some budget items will be reduced or eliminated. Please make sure they are not items that are essential to our most vulnerable neighbors.** People who are already struggling the most need the State's help now more than ever.

Please accept our gratitude for your willingness to add your voice in support of funding for programs and services to help people living on a low income.

Your action is requested by March 16th!

Sincerely,

Sister Joan Marie Stief
L.E.G. Coordinator
Parish Social Ministry

Love for others, and especially for the poor, is made concrete by promoting justice.

~The Hundredth Year

What Can I Do?...Write or Email Governor O'Malley AND your State legislators on the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee. If your delegate or senator is not on the lists below, write to the Chairman.

Governor Martin O'Malley
Webform: <http://www.governor.maryland.gov/mail/>



Budget and Taxation Committee

Chair: Ulysses Currie
ulysses.currie@senate.state.md.us
Vice-Chair: Edward Kasemeyer
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House Appropriations Committee

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Vice-Chair: James Proctor, Jr
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Susan L. M. Aumann
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*To find your legislators go to
<http://mlis.state.md.us>.*

*If you do not have web access,
call me at 410.261.6782.*

S A M P L E " A L E R T " L E T T E R

[Date]

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED HELP TO THOSE MOST IN NEED.

Dear _____:

With the nation falling deeper into a recession, many Marylanders are struggling to meet their basic needs. I hope you will focus on the needs of the many families and individuals living on a low-income and children overcoming abuse, neglect and special needs when finalizing the State's 2010 budget and using the federal dollars received under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

As [a volunteer, employer, or _____], I know many hard-working families and seniors who have worked all their lives are struggling to make ends meet. [*Optional: I am especially concerned about (insert appropriate example).*]

The budget should include provisions that will make a difference to those struggling the most:

1. **LIFT HIRING FREEZE for DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES and FUND DIRECT SERVICE WORKERS.**
2. **PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING for BENEFIT PROGRAMS, including Temporary Cash Assistance, the Temporary Disability Assistance Program, and foster care.**
3. **PROVIDE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR ENERGY ASSISTANCE AND LOW-INCOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS as such programs will help reduce the need for energy assistance and help create jobs.**
4. **RESTORE the STATE FUNDING FORMULA for CHILDREN with SEVERE DISABILITES to ATTEND NONPUBLIC SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS**

I urge you and your colleagues to take whatever action is necessary to protect vulnerable Marylanders in these four important ways. Providing assistance to those in need will provide essential relief and help.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

Name
Address