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Memorandum

To: Pastors/Administrators
From: Adrienne Curry, Program Director CRS/Justice Education
Date: 5/27/2010
Re: Help Families Impacted by Economic Recession!

Summary: The House and Senate are considering a bill, *The American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act* (H.R. 4213) that would, among other things, provide initial funding for the National Housing Trust fund, continue support for job creation through the TANF emergency fund, and extend eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits through December 31, 2010.

Background: The nation is slowly recovering from a recession that began in 2007. This has been one of the worst economic periods for American families since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The national unemployment rate continues to hover near ten percent, 15 million Americans are officially unemployed, and 44 percent (six million people) have been out of work for more than six months. This is the highest number of long-term unemployed since the United States began keeping that data in 1948.

Ten million more workers have given up looking for a job, and others are working part-time, but want full-time work. Since the recession began, the U.S. economy has lost 8.5 million jobs, which means with new entrants to the workforce, eleven million new jobs must be created to return to the pre-recession unemployment rate of five percent.

Catholic social teaching: The Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development put forth the following six moral criteria for job creation and economic recovery legislation:

1. *Respect for life and dignity:* do policy initiatives respect and enhance the life and dignity of all? Do programs for education and job creation recognize and affirm the diversity of gifts and talents each person has to contribute to the common good?
2. *Subsidiarity and solidarity:* Are policy initiatives and investments focused on local communities? Are they adaptable and flexible funding enough to respond to the needs of differing communities? Will policies lead to a shared recovery for all?
3. *Respect for marriage and family:* Do federal programs provide a genuine safety net, create jobs and offer opportunities that are supportive of and strengthen quality family life? Does the policy respect and encourage family ties that are so important on matters of poverty and the economy?
4. *Priority for the poor and vulnerable:* Are resources and programs targeted to those most in need?

5. *Recognition of cultural diversity:* Do programs and initiatives recognize the particular challenges of minority communities? Do programs and initiatives reduce the systemic economic disparities experienced by minority communities?
6. *Right to economic initiative and productive work:* Do the policies promote just wages and benefits necessary to support both the worker and their family?

Take Action Now!

Contact your Representative and Senators and urge them to help families still struggling from the impacts of the economic recession by including the following in *The American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act* (H.R.4213):

- Urge funding for the National Housing Trust Fund that will provide housing for very low-income families and maintain and create jobs in the hard hit construction industry.
- Urge continued funding for the successful job creation program for low-income youth.
- Urge the extension of unemployment insurance eligibility for laid-off workers through the end of this year.