

# Faithful Advocacy

**After years of effort, an  
opportunity to make a big  
difference for hungry people!**

Now is our chance to help Lutherans do our part to expand and strengthen U.S. programs to end hunger and extreme poverty. The good news: we have a supportive administration. Our advocacy is still urgently needed: lobbyists for other special interests are working overtime to fund their own priorities (and pull money away from programs like development aid or food stamps). Still, if we do our part, we have a good chance of achieving much of what we seek.

So take a few minutes and email, call, or write a post card or note to your members of Congress. Urge them to:

1. Approve a FY 2010 federal budget with a further increase above the additional \$4.2 billion for hunger and development the Senate and House approved in the budget framework.
2. Take leadership to strengthen and better coordinate U.S. development aid to help poor people lift themselves up out of extreme poverty and hunger -- key underlying causes of conflict in the world today. At a minimum the Senate needs to pass the main provisions of H.R. 2139 (*recently passed as an amendment to another House bill. President Obama co-sponsored a previous version of this effort as a Senator.*)
3. Place reaching the Millennium Development Goals at the heart of our nation's efforts to help the poorest of the poor.

The past few years have shown how modest increases in aid from countries like ours can make a big difference. For example, 19 million children in Africa are going to school who would not have without changes we helped bring about this decade. The price tag for what we want is about equal to a month's cost of the Iraq war. And we can help make it happen with just 10 minutes of our time this week. This update contains all we need to do our part to make it happen.

*Tips on contacting an elected official:* Many people only rarely write or e-mail their elected officials because they find it intimidating, or wonder if it makes any difference. But if we don't, our point of view will be undercounted. *The solution:* A simple 4 to 6 sentence note, email, or postcard, written in 8 to 10 minutes.

Begin by thinking about what approach might be most helpful to your particular member of Congress (e.g. thanks for any past leadership). Center your note on what you want your official to do. Add a reason or two and perhaps a statistic. State clearly what you want and ask for a response. If you get inspired and write more, OK. But brief is just fine! The main thing is to get it out the door!

*Two examples of notes to elected officials.*

Dear Senator Smith,

Members of our church are discussing the economic crisis and ways government might help at home and abroad.

I would like to see you work to strengthen financial accountability and transparency and ensure relief plans help ordinary people with health care, mortgages, jobs, retirement and college savings, etc.

People in other nations are hurting too. Please work to increase funding for International Affairs programs that address hunger and extreme poverty. And urge support for H.R. 2139 in the Senate to better coordinate such efforts. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, Mary L. Public

Dear Representative Jones,

The continuing wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere remind us that military options have grave limits in solving conflicts. Thus, I was dismayed to see budget discussions assuming we must add tens of billions in new funding for the military, but arguing over new money for the International Affairs programs that address extreme poverty and hunger in the world -- key underlying causes of conflict.

I hope that you will work to contain military spending and expand programs that reduce violence in the world. Specifically, increase the \$4 billion increase in poverty-related foreign aid approved thus far. Add your leadership to enacting at a minimum the vision of H.R. 2139 to improve the effectiveness of our aid. Thanks for listening. I'd appreciate a reply on what you're doing about these concerns.

Your constituent, John Q. Citizen

Make the most of your note: Send it to other members of Congress... Send it to a local newspaper, too! Even if your letter isn't chosen it can help another on the issue get printed. Send us a copy: [lpf@ecunet.org](mailto:lpf@ecunet.org) LPF, 1710 11th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122.

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