



COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

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Dear Representative:

We want to share in the strongest terms the strong support of the Coalition on Human Needs for the 12-month continuation of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Emergency Fund, expected to be part of the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act (H.R. 4213), legislation we fully support. Statements made about the TANF Emergency Fund on the “YouCut” website are erroneous. Please do not be misled.

As noted by [Chairman McDermott](#) of the Income Security and Family Support Subcommittee of the House Committee on Ways and Means, the continuation of the TANF Emergency Fund is supported by the bipartisan National Governors’ Association, National Conference of State Legislatures, and National Association of Counties. They do so because painfully high levels of unemployment caused by the recession have led to increased numbers of desperately poor families. The Emergency Fund supports subsidized employment. By the end of September, it is projected that the Fund will create 185,000 jobs. Some of these families have been helped through cash assistance. In order to receive that assistance, parents are subject to the same job search and work requirements as required of any other TANF participant. Some families have received one-time aid, and that has helped families to avoid eviction or utilities shut-offs.

Governor Haley Barbour of Mississippi has used this funding to create a subsidized jobs program called STEPS. He said “The STEPS program will provide much-needed aid during this recession by enabling businesses to hire new workers, thus enhancing the economic engines of our local communities.” More recently, [Governor Barbour said](#) “he hoped the program would be extended so that more jobs could be created.”

The service providers, faith groups, and others in the Coalition on Human Needs hope so too. Economists estimate that about one in four children are poor – the direct result of the deep recession. Unemployment for women who head households is higher than the national average. The TANF Emergency Fund responds to great need, while creating temporary jobs that will help prepare parents for further employment as the economy improves. Please do not allow a misleading attempt to grab headlines to stand in the way of a needed program with bipartisan national support.

Sincerely,

Deborah Weinstein
Executive Director