

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH

Appropriations for Domestic Human Needs

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 13.5% of Americans live in poverty. To address the challenges of life in poverty, the U.S. Congress appropriates funds for critical domestic human needs programs, including anti-poverty initiatives, health care support, and opportunities for citizens returning to society from prison. While charities are essential allies in combating poverty in the U.S., private funds only account for roughly 5% of the total food assistance delivered in the United States. The remaining balance is covered by the federal government, and these nutrition and other federal programs are an important social safety net for low-income, at-risk, or transitioning individuals and families.

The Episcopal Church General Convention supports the social safety net and calls on Episcopalians everywhere to advocate for key human needs programs. Equipped by this mandate, Episcopalians can engage the federal budget appropriations process by urging their policymakers to draw a circle of protection around domestic human needs programs, including:

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) WIC equips low-income mothers and their children with essential nutrition benefits. **We call on the Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee to allocate \$6.62 billion WIC for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18).**

Federal Unemployment Benefits and Allowances support low-income people struggling to find viable employment, and **we urge the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee to allocate \$849,000 million toward this program for FY18.**

Low-Income Housing Assistance and Homelessness Prevention Appropriated by the Transportation-HUD and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee, these programs grant homeless or low-income persons the assistance they need to find viable housing. We ask that these programs receive robust funding for FY18, including at least **\$21.2 billion for Section 8 Vouchers and \$2.67 billion for Homelessness Assistant Grants.**

The Second Chance Act This law empowers people returning from prison through grants that support education, job training, substance abuse, and mental health services. For FY18, **we request that the Justice, Science, Commerce Appropriations Subcommittee allocate \$100 million to support Second Chance Act grants and programmatic support.**

Mandatory Spending

We call on members of Congress to reject cuts or harmful structural changes to important social safety net programs such as Medicaid, SNAP(food stamps), Social Security, and Medicare, which are mandatorily funded by the federal budget.

Learn More:

The WIC Program: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/women-infants-and-children-wic>

Federal Unemployment Benefits: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/unemployment-insurance/>

Housing Assistance: https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/homeless

The Second Chance Act <http://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/projects/second-chance-act/>

Protecting Basic Safety Net Programs: <http://www.chn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/SAVE-for-all-letter-11-17-16final.pdf>

