

Faith Based Principles for Missouri's 2010 Budget Process

1. Our faiths call us to compassion for the vulnerable and the "least" among us. Our faiths lead us to care for the world actively and purposefully, as part of a larger community. We strive therefore to alleviate the suffering of all: the unemployed and underemployed during hard economic times, children and seniors, and those with mental illnesses, developmental disabilities and addictions.
2. Our faiths call us to seek justice that provides an opportunity for all families and individuals to meet their basic needs, such as food, housing, health care and the opportunity to work.
3. Our faiths call us to envision God's future and find ways to raise adequate resources fairly and equitably toward its realization.
4. Our faiths call us to be good stewards and distribute resources in ways that foster a just, equitable and peaceful community.
5. Our faiths affirm the dignity of all persons, all workers and all families, and lead us to urge state services and programs designed to foster human dignity.
6. We believe in participation by people of faith in Missouri's democratically elected government. We consider the Missouri state budget to be a moral document, one that can and should be crafted for the welfare of all its citizens and to include the values of those who are people of faith.

Because of our values, we communities of faith in Missouri express great concern about the proposed cuts to health, mental health and social services for the 2010 fiscal year. As people of faith, we pledge to influence the budget process actively so that the 2010 budget provides adequate health, mental health and social services during the emergency caused by the economic crisis.

Specifically, we think the 2010 budget should:

- Appropriate available resources, including federal economic recovery or "stimulus" money, and the provider tax offered by the hospitals to insure more low income parents.
- Restore and maintain state general revenue funding for health, mental health and social services in the core budget bills. Federal economic recovery dollars should supplement, not supplant, general revenues committed to these core budget obligations.
- Expand health coverage for children and families.
- Maintain child care assistance and expand eligibility to more low income working families.

- Reject proposals to give one time tax rebates or tax credits instead of funding services for families, seniors, children and people living with disabilities.
- Anticipate and encourage exploration of additional sources of state revenue for the above purposes.

For Information purposes only - The following faith leaders support this effort (partial list): The Rev. Dr. David Greenhaw, President of Eden Seminary; Rabbi Susan Talve, Central Reform Congregation; Rabbi Jim Bennett, Congregation Shaare Emeth; The Revs. James Morris and Walter Maddox, Lane Tabernacle CME Church; The Rev. Scott Stearman, Kirkwood Baptist Church; Ruth Ehresman and the Rev. John Vien, Pius V Roman Catholic Church; the Rev. Josephine Fields, Parish Nurse Association; the Rev. Dr. Martin Rafanan, Gateway Homeless Services; the Rev. Mary Albert, Epiphany United Church of Christ; the Rt. Rev. Wayne Smith, Diocese of Missouri; the Rev. Teresa Mithen, St. John's Episcopal Church; the Rev. Dr. Warren Crews, Emmanuel Episcopal Church; the Rev. Tamsen Whistler, Trinity Episcopal Church; the Rev. Rebecca Ragland, the Episcopal Church of the Holy Communion; the Rev. Jason Samuel, the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration (partial list).

Organizations supporting this effort include: Missouri Hospital Association, Paraquad, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), MO Budget Project, MO Health Care for All, MO Jobs with Justice, Catholic Family and Children's Services, Mental Health America of Eastern Missouri (partial list)