



Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development

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Dear Colleagues,

Tell the Deficit "Super Committee" and your members of Congress that rising poverty at home and abroad requires them to protect programs that serve poor and vulnerable people.

CURRENT SITUATION: The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction ("Super Committee") could finalize its plan soon to reduce the federal deficit by \$1.5 trillion over the next ten years. The Super Committee needs to vote on a report to be presented to the House and Senate by November 23rd. But, an agreement needs to be reached soon in order to meet that deadline. If no agreement is reached, automatic across-the-board cuts will go into effect in 2013. Many programs that serve poor and vulnerable people at home and abroad are in danger of receiving devastating and disproportionate cuts.

The bishops recently acknowledged that reducing future unsustainable deficits is important, and reminded the Super Committee that their decisions are "profoundly moral, and they have enormous human consequences." They offered several criteria to help guide difficult budgetary decisions. Read the letter [here](#).

USCCB POSITION/CHURCH TEACHING: Archbishop Timothy Dolan, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), recently highlighted the urgency of poverty in America in a letter to his brother bishops, saying, "Widespread unemployment, underemployment and pervasive poverty are diminishing human lives, undermining human dignity, and hurting children and families. I hope we can use our opportunities as pastors, teachers, and leaders to focus public attention and priority on the scandal of so much poverty and so many without work in our society."

Bishop Howard Hubbard, Chairman of the USCCB Committee on International Justice and Peace, and Ken Hackett, President of Catholic Relief Services, [wrote the Senate](#) noting that cuts to poverty-focused international assistance will cost lives. This aid, which is less than one percent of the federal budget, feeds millions of people, helps subsistence farmers grow more food, provides HIV/AIDS medicines and vaccines to prevent disease, and supports orphans, victims of natural disasters, and refugees fleeing for their lives.

USCCB has also developed a [website that serves as a clearinghouse for resources about U.S. poverty](#) and another [site on global poverty](#).

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Domestic Social Development

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[Join our Action Network](#), and we'll send you updates on how you can speak out on important issues that impact human life and dignity.

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