



Join Lutheran Bishops; Speak Out on the Minnesota Budget as a Moral Document

All six Minnesota bishops of the ELCA signed on to a letter encouraging Minnesota legislators and the Governor to “allow us all to be a part of determining a future for Minnesota in which dignity and value of each one of us is upheld. The challenge is not just yours – it’s ours.” For the full text of the letter, visit our website at www.lcppm.org. They followed up with an April 16 visit with legislative leaders and Governor Pawlenty to convey with their presence that “the budget is a moral document that reflects the choices we make for our life together. The measure of our moral fiber as a people is how we treat those who need our help the most.”

Join the chorus of concerned people of faith and voice your support for a moral budget. Here’s how:

1. Contact your state representative and state senator and say that “We are not afraid of tax increases if it means poor people who are sick can get health care, families who lose their homes find shelter, and children are cared for.” To find out how to contact your decision makers, click here: www.gis.leg.mn/mapserver/districts
2. Pass this message along to your friends and family and urge them to take action.
3. Write a letter to the editor and submit it to your newspaper and/or your church newsletter. If you or someone you know relies on Minnesota’s network of health and human services, tell that story.

Talking points:

Minnesota must take a balanced approach to solving the state’s \$6.4 billion budget shortfall. Given the magnitude of the problem, no options should be taken off the table. Balancing solely through spending cuts takes dollars out Minnesota’s economy and causes pain to our neighbors.

Minnesotans support fair taxes. But the MN Department of Revenue reports that those making more than \$448,000 annually pay 8.9 percent of their incomes in state and local taxes while those making around \$31,000 - \$67,000 pay over 12 percent.

Invest in people and prepare for recovery. The state’s budget-balancing decisions should not make the impact of the recession worse for those Minnesotans least able to weather the downturn. We must have sufficient funds to maintain services people need during tough economic times while streamlining programs for greater effectiveness and efficiency. As the Bishops said, “Human lives hang on the brink of your decisions.”

For the full policy agenda of LCPPM, visit www.lcppm.org.