



## NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby Overview Position Domestic Human Needs

**BACKGROUND:** Network believes that domestic policy and spending must guarantee the ability for all persons within our nation to live in a state of human dignity. This requires access to:

- Affordable, adequate housing,
- Nutritious, culturally appropriate food,
- Clothing to match weather they face,
- Healthcare
- Education which not only prepares them for the workforce, but enhances their quality of life,
- Neighborhood, as well as national, security
- Access to social safety net when required, and
- Employment which allows one to provide for the needs of a family, without working an excessive number of hours, and which allows one's talents to be exercised.

Attached are NETWORK Positions on housing, Gulf Coast needs, nutrition and spending priorities for the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. NETWORK will continue to work on other safety net issues, including nutrition (particularly the re-authorization of child nutrition programs, other supports for children, employment and support of those trying to re-enter society after incarceration. We will also engage generally with tax issues, as justice demands that an equitable and fair tax system prevails. Our policies continue to be based on Catholic Social Teaching and supported by the *Preamble to the United States Constitution*.

“The state ought to primarily devote themselves to the service of the common good.” *Rerum Novarum: On the Condition of the Working Classes*, #26 (1891), Pope Leo XIII

“It is the public authority’s role to protect culture among all, even minorities.” *Gaudium et Spes: The Church in the Modern World* #59 (1965), Second Vatican Council

“Flowing from our God-given dignity, each person has basic rights and responsibilities...People have a fundamental right to life and to those things that make life truly human: food, clothing, housing, health care, education, security, social services, and employment. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities – to one another, to our families, and to the larger society, to respect the rights of others and to work for the common good.” U.S. Catholic Bishops, *A Century of Social Teaching*, 5

“It is a strict duty of justice and truth not to allow fundamental human needs to remain unsatisfied, and not to allow those burdened by such needs to perish. It is also necessary to help these needy people to acquire expertise, to enter the circle of exchange, and to develop their skills in order to make the best use of their capacities and resources.” Pope John Paul II, *On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum* (1991), #34

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