

September 30, 2004

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley:

When Senate and House negotiators meet to complete work on the Jumpstart Our Business Strength (JOBS) (S. 1637/H.R. 4520) Act, we request that you include the Charity Aid, Recovery and Empowerment Act of 2003 (CARE Act) as part of the final package. While we have not taken a position on S. 1637/H.R. 4520, we urge you to seize this opportunity to pass the CARE Act.

The CARE Act will provide crucial assistance to charities and the people they serve by restoring \$1.3 billion in funding to the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) program; allowing non-itemizers to claim charitable deductions on their taxes to spur additional private giving; creating a Compassion Capital Fund to provide technical assistance and capacity building for faith-based and community groups; and authorizing \$33 million to establish group maternity homes for young mothers

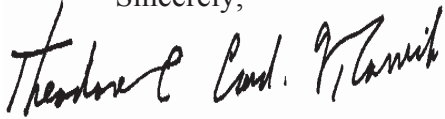
As pastors and providers of essential health care and social services, we see the many people in need in our communities and the admirable work of those trying to help them. That is why we believe that restoring SSBG funding is especially crucial. States use SSBG funding to assist community groups and religious agencies that serve working families, abused and abandoned children, persons with disabilities, and the frail elderly.

We support these provisions in the CARE Act because they are among the very few active legislative initiatives that will help low-income families and the most vulnerable members of our society. If enacted, they will strengthen the partnership between government and religious and other community groups to meet the basic human needs of all in our country, a partnership that is demanded by the moral scandal of so much poverty in the richest nation on earth.

Congress is poised to finalize tax relief for corporations. We believe Congress has a moral obligation to dedicate additional national financial resources to help the poor and vulnerable among us, by restoring funding to the faith-based and community groups who serve the "least among us."

Please do all you can to make sure the CARE Act is passed as part of S. 1637/H.R.4520.

Sincerely,



Theodore Cardinal McCarrick
Archbishop of Washington
Chairman Domestic Policy Committee
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



Thomas A. DeStefano
President
Catholic Charities USA



Rev. Michael D. Place, STD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Health Association of the
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