

ALCEE L. HASTINGS
23RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
FLORIDA

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DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN
SENIOR DEMOCRATIC WHIP



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0923

October 24, 2011

Fr. Larry Snyder
President
Catholic Charities USA
Sixty-Six Canal Center Plaza
Suite 600
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Rabbi Steve Gutow
President & CEO
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
1775 K Street, NW
Suite 320
Washington, DC 20009

Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon
General Secretary
National Council of Churches
475 Riverside Drive
New York, New York 10115

Dear Rabbi Gutow, Father Snyder, and Reverend Kinnamon:

I write today to express my full support for the fourth annual Fighting Poverty with Faith mobilization. Your co-sponsorship of the 2011 Food Stamp Challenge is commendable and your leadership will move many individuals and communities to take action in the fight against poverty.

I have always been a tireless advocate for eradicating hunger and poverty in America. The 45 million American citizens who live in poverty and rely on assistance from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a number which is far too high for a nation such as ours. Last month, the United States Census Bureau released its 2010 Poverty Data, and I was dismayed to see that 28 percent of the constituents living in my Congressional district are living in poverty, which is a stark increase since the 2007 recession began. Furthermore, child poverty in my district is at an all-time high of 40 percent. The fact that children nationwide make up more than half of all people living on food stamps is quite troubling. I believe a call to action is needed immediately. Our priority should always be to protect the health and well-being of our children and communities. It is for this reason that I happily stand together with Fighting Poverty with Faith.

You will be pleased to know that my office has accepted your challenge, and will be participating in the 2011 Fighting Poverty with Faith Food Stamp Challenge. I am sure that this will indeed be a powerful event that seeks to understand the struggles of millions of people all across our nation. The personal knowledge and experience will undoubtedly prove unforgettable.

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

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I thank you for your tireless efforts in the fight to end poverty, and look forward to continuing to enhance and encourage a necessary and vital dialogue on this extremely important issue. With warm personal regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Alcee L. Hastings". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress