

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 12, 2011

The Honorable Kent Conrad  
Chairman  
Senate Budget Committee  
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Sessions  
Ranking Member  
Senate Budget Committee  
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Conrad and Ranking Member Sessions:

We respectfully request that you support funding for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) in your fiscal year 2012 Budget Resolution.

As you know, the CSBG supplies the core funding for almost 1,100 Community Action Agencies (CAAs), nationwide. These agencies promote stability and growth in our communities by coordinating local initiatives to help low-wage working families and retirees achieve economic security.

CSBG provides flexible dollars to local agencies to deliver community-designed responses to their unique needs and causes of poverty. Funding is targeted toward our nation's most vulnerable families: those living at or below the poverty line. Resources are not only devoted to providing these individuals with the tools to achieve self-sufficiency and economic independence, but to strengthening low-income communities to create and expand local opportunities. In addition, CSBG funds support local activities that generate nearly twice as much private funding as the CSBG itself provides; \$1.98 of private support is leveraged for every CSBG dollar in Community Action Agencies.

In the current economic downturn the need for CSBG services has never been greater. In 2009, the most recent year for which data is available, CAAs served over 20 million individuals. Parents who have lost their jobs have turned to CAAs for help in meeting basic needs and making a fresh start. Military families whose loved ones are serving extended duty are receiving help from CAAs to make ends meet. Families in danger of losing their homes to foreclosure are receiving help from CAA housing counseling, homeownership, and asset development initiatives. Those facing skyrocketing home energy costs are turning to CAAs not only for LIHEAP and other energy assistance, but also to get help meeting other basic needs in the face of these costs, including food, health care and transportation payments.

It is clear that America's families need the services provided by CAAs through the Community Service Block Grant. We ask that you include funding for CSBG in your fiscal year 2012 Budget Resolution.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Charles Grassley  
United States Senator