



Sowers of Justice

Catholic Legislative Network

**Action
Alert**

***Call By Noon, March 21:
Urge Representatives to Pass
a Budget Resolution That
Meets Our State's Obligations***

March 18, 2005

Background:

Last week, we encouraged Sowers of Justice members to ask their legislators to raise revenues in our state to meet our obligation to the most poor and vulnerable. Next week, the Minnesota House of Representatives will take a key vote on a bill commonly referred to as a budget resolution. The vote will play a pivotal role in determining the maximum amount of state spending for the next biennium. A smaller budget resolution would leave no room for necessary increases in funding for health care, child care, and housing. A larger budget resolution would leave room to debate the merits of various ways of raising taxes in our state to meet those obligations.

So far, the debate about the budget resolution is headed in the wrong direction. This week, the House Ways and Means Committee debated this issue. The budget resolution amount coming out of the Ways and Means Committee is not sufficient to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our state. If it passes, the resolution could close the door on increasing funding for key programs like health care, child care, housing, and education beyond the Governor's proposal.

However, we have an important opportunity to change the debate. A bipartisan team that includes Rep. Dan Dorman (R-Albert Lea) and Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) will introduce an amendment on the floor of the House that will raise the maximum amount the state can spend for the next biennium. The amendment would give the House a variety of options for meeting our state's obligations.

This is an exciting bipartisan initiative that recognizes that we need not dwell in the false scarcity created by the no-new-taxes pledge. The proposal moves us closer to being a state that invests its abundance wisely in areas that reflect our true core values.

Recommended Action

Please contact your Representative in the House.

- Ask them to vote YES on the Dorman/Greiling amendment to the House budget resolution.
- Be clear that voting YES allows the Legislature to raise revenue and meet our state's obligations to the most vulnerable.
- Remind your legislator that without an increase to the budget resolution, there is not enough revenue to stop cuts in health care, child care, and housing that will cause people real pain.

FFI: Contact Matt Gladue, 651-291-4484