

Invest in Jobs That Reach All Workers and Communities

All Americans are experiencing the hardships of the recession, but the suffering is more profound for millions of Latino families struggling to find and sustain work while putting food on the table and keeping a roof over their heads. Although federal recovery efforts have saved and created jobs, they have not prioritized those communities suffering the most, as evidenced by the exclusion of factors such as local unemployment, poverty, income, and racial and ethnic makeup in determining the allotment of funding, all in the name of “efficiency.”

The disproportionate impact of the recession on Latino workers, combined with the short reach of recovery efforts, has steadily chipped away at public confidence in political leaders’ ability to help workers and families. Congress should lead the charge for effective job creation policies in the coming months in the following ways:

Invest in job creation for hard-hit communities. For many workers struggling in the current recession, there is no substitute for direct investment in an immediate job. Congress should:

- ✓ Create a public works job program that employs economically disadvantaged workers to meet existing needs in their communities, such as by repairing and maintaining buildings and grounds, working at community health centers, caring for children before and after school, and providing services for seniors.
- ✓ Expand support for summer youth employment and transitional jobs programs to ensure that workers with limited work experience and skills can obtain paid, on-the-job work experience as well as assistance transitioning to unsubsidized employment.

Make financing available to nonprofit human and social service providers. Nonprofit social service providers, even those with a strong tradition of administering good programs and services, are having trouble maintaining fiscal stability, meeting local demand, expanding their operations, and hiring new employees. Meanwhile, many of their sources of revenue—foundations, state and local governments, and corporations—are simultaneously reducing their contributions and delaying payments. Congress should:

- ✓ Target credit, grants, financing, and loans to such organizations to stabilize them, help them expand, and allow them to meet the needs of their communities.

Put people to work revitalizing their communities. Many foreclosed properties are in need of maintenance and many homeowner-occupied properties are in need of weatherization, while millions of construction, maintenance, repair, and grounds workers lack steady employment. Congress should:

- ✓ Provide resources for local government and nonprofit organizations to hire workers to carry out neighborhood revitalization in areas devastated by foreclosures.
- ✓ Support housing and financial counseling programs that offer pre-purchase, post-purchase, foreclosure prevention, and financial counseling services to help low-income families get back on their feet financially.

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