



Stand Up, Sit Down: Coalition's Forum Calls Attention To Domestic Budget

Posted on May 31, 2007 12:12 PM

A broad coalition of social-action groups and ministries will sponsor a forum Friday in Des Moines to urge U.S. Rep. [Leonard Boswell](#) to stand up against a presidential veto of domestic-spending increases. Then, members of the coalition will sit down to a 98-cent lunch to show how little is left on the plate of food-stamp recipients.

Social-action and religious groups have joined together as a part of this coalition. The social-action groups are [Iowa Citizen Action Network](#); the [American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO](#); [Food Bank of Iowa](#); [RESULTS](#); the [Iowa Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers](#); [Every Child Matters](#); [Working Families Win](#); [Iowa Community Action Association](#); [Child and Family Policy Center](#); and [Iowans for Sensible Priorities](#). The religious community is being represented by Social Witness Advocacy and Education Ministry for the [Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church](#), [United Methodist Conference](#), and [National Catholic Rural Life Conference](#).

"New leadership in Congress has meant a change in thinking and passage of a budget that is fair for all Americans," said Charlie Wishman, organizer for ICAN. "However, the president promises to veto any proposal that exceeds the levels he set out earlier this year -- levels that contained many cuts to vital discretionary programs. Once again, this president will use his veto power to subvert the needs and the will of Americans, only to stay the course on dangerous budget cuts that will affect millions of Americans.

"Our message to Congressman Boswell is that he needs to stand by this budget, and vote to override this president's veto," Wishman said.

Boswell, a Democrat representing the 3rd District, has been invited to attend the event; however, it is not known at this time if he will be there or if members of his staff will be available.

Speakers at the meeting include Wishman, who will present a budget overview; Carrie Fitzgerald, senior health policy associate with Child and Family Policy Center, will speak about the State Children's Health Insurance Program and children's health care; Lana Ross, executive director for Iowa Community Action Association, will speak about ICAA's programs; Jos Linn of RESULTS and Karen Ford of the Food Bank of Iowa will speak about food stamps and providing for the hungry in our communities; and Matt Tapscott of AFSCME will discuss the issues of child-care providers.

A "food stamp lunch" is being planned during the forum. The meal will be provided at no cost to event participants and will match as closely as possible the 98 cent per meal average benefit of food stamp recipients.

"While many members of Congress have been taking the 'Food Stamp Challenge' and living on a food-stamp budget for a week, our attendees will be asked to participate in just one meal," Wishman said.

Iowa Citizen Action Network is also encouraging those who live in Iowa's other congressional districts to contact appropriate members of Congress. Residents can find out who represents their districts by visiting [Yahoo! News](#) for an interactive form and map.

"We need Iowans to encourage their representatives to override any veto," Wishman added. "These programs -- like Head Start, food stamps and children's health care -- help kids learn and stay healthy. They've suffered deep cuts in past years and we need a budget that reflects our values of caring for all of our families and that will help communities thrive."

The forum will begin at noon in Meeting Room 3 at the Des Moines downtown public library, [1000 Grand Ave.](#)

http://www.essentialestrogen.com/2007/05/stand_up_sit_down_coalitions_f.html