



# National Association for State Community Services Programs

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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February 6, 2006

## **President's Budget Puts 15 Million Poor At Risk**

Washington, DC – President Bush today released his FY 2007 budget, in which he zero-ed out funding for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), placing more than 15 million poor and near-poor individuals at risk. As his alternative, the President's budget recommends a new economic block grant that eliminates several critical and successful anti-poverty initiatives, while adding bureaucratic layers and administrative spending to implement new and untested plans.

According to Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA), Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, "For the second year in a row, the President has zeroed out the CSBG program—an essential tool in meeting the unique needs of low-income communities across the country. These programs are especially vital because they help low-income individuals and families become more self-sufficient. It is imperative that full funding be restored to this critical and successful anti-poverty program. Congress fought back last year and said this was a bad idea. Yet again, President Bush gives us a budget that shortchanges our opportunity and shortchanges our future."

The CSBG is an essential anti-poverty program that is distributed to over 1,000 Community Action Agencies (CAAs) across the country. CSBG funds are utilized to leverage resources and fund programs that respond to the needs of low-income people. In FY 2004, \$594 million in CSBG funds were leveraged to create \$9.7 billion in funding. With those resources, CAAs assisted over 15 million individuals, including 6 million low-income families and 3.7 million children with housing, nutritional, educational and employment needs.

"The Community Services Block Grant program is popular and successful, with bipartisan support. As a block grant, it gives states and communities flexibility to use these federal funds in the manner that will be most successful to meet local needs," said Representative John Boehner (R-OH), former chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce during discussions in 2003 regarding CSBG reauthorization. "For decades the Community Services Block Grant has played an important role in the fight against poverty. Millions of needy Americans have benefited from the hard work of the Community Action Agencies that administer these successful programs."

In 2005, Community Action Agencies (CAAs) responded with speed and flexibility – where the federal government could not - to meet the needs of Hurricane Katrina and Rita evacuees. CAAs provided immediate assistance with transportation, food, medical checkups, housing, utility deposits, job placement, and clothing to over 355,000 evacuees.

The National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP) vowed to fight the elimination of CSBG funds in the President's budget. Board Chair Connie Greer said, "NASCSPP is committed to gaining the support of each Governor and every Member of Congress to stress the critical importance of Community Action as the nation's best strategy to create opportunities of self-sufficiency for families and communities. This effort includes securing full funding for the Community Services Block Grant."

For more information on the CSBG, please visit [www.nascsp.org](http://www.nascsp.org).

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