



COMMUNITY ACTION UNDER ATTACK:

THE THREAT TO PROGRAMS FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE IN BOSTON

February 4, 2011

The Obama Administration has proposed devastating cuts and changes to Community Action. ABCD, as Boston's anti-poverty Community Action agency, will be hit hard if these changes go through. More important, critical services for Boston's low-income families will be lost.

WHAT IS THE ADMINISTRATION TRYING TO DO?

The Obama Administration has proposed elimination of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), the central source of funding for Community Action Agencies like ABCD.

WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?

CSBG is the *ONLY* federal program focused on comprehensive services to fight poverty. If it is eliminated, ABCD—and more than a thousand other Community Action Agencies across the country—will be forced to **slash programs**, or even to **shut their doors**.

WHY IS CSBG SO IMPORTANT?

At ABCD and other agencies, CSBG is the “glue” that holds other programs together. At ABCD, this money also supports our Neighborhood Network of service centers. If you take CSBG away, it's like pulling one card out of a house of cards: the whole thing falls down!

WHAT SERVICES COULD WE LOSE?

Here in Boston, CSBG is critical to all of the services ABCD provides. In 2010, we were able to reach **over 80,000 needy households** using CSBG dollars. These things would not have happened without CSBG:

- *927 jobless adults entered new careers.*
- *195 individuals got a GED or high school diploma; 360 got a college degree or certificate.*
- *16,593 families got fuel aid that kept them safe and warm.*
- *1,444 homes were weatherized.*
- *2,340 children got a Head Start.*
- *676 households learned how to manager their money better.*
- *471 homeless families found homes.*
- *825 families were saved from eviction.*
- *4,210 youth got their first job.*

Across the country, CSBG provides essential services such as employment, education and housing to over **20.7 million** low-income Americans, reaching nearly 1 out of every 4 persons

living in poverty. Without CSBG, Head Start, Fuel Assistance, Summer Youth Employment and other programs run by Community Action Agencies would struggle to stay alive.

IS IT ALL ABOUT MONEY?

NO! Community Action and CSBG are also important because they provide a voice and a trusted source of support for poor people.

Community Action Agencies like ABCD are guided by low-income people. The CSBG regulations require that their Boards are made up of community representatives—one third of whom must be low-income. Unlike other government programs, Community Action (like Head Start) **belongs to the people it serves**. The national Community Action network represents low-income people across the country, giving them opportunity and a voice.

Community Action Agencies are trusted, even in communities that have been underserved and isolated. Staff members understand the problems of poverty “from the inside”, are responsive to the changing needs of communities, and “look like and sound like” the people they serve.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

It is essential that President Obama and the Congress hear from communities all across America. We need to let our national leaders know that Community Action is important to us. You can call or email the President and your representatives in Congress. Tell them how Community Action has made a difference in your life. And encourage others to do the same!

We have to deliver the message that Community Action belongs to the people. And Community Action works!

ACTION FOR BOSTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, INC.

YOUR COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

