



# CIRCLE *of* PROTECTION

June 18, 2024

Dear President Biden and Members of Congress,

We write to you as the Circle of Protection, leaders of diverse church bodies and Christian organizations. We congratulate you for resolving disputes and coming to decisions on two major appropriations bills early this year. It is morally and spiritually important to help hungry people, so we especially celebrate the allocation of an additional \$1 billion for WIC nutrition assistance and the appropriation of \$10.3 billion for international humanitarian assistance. We also applaud the House of Representatives for bipartisan approval of a tax package that would expand the Child Tax Credit for low-income families without adding to deficit spending.

We hope this Congress will still be able to pass three important pending bills, with priority attention to their impact among people struggling with hunger and poverty.

Regarding the **Farm Bill**, we welcome some provisions of the version that the House Agriculture Committee has passed, notably SNAP eligibility for ex-offenders. Nonetheless, we oppose the bill because of the big cut it proposes in future SNAP benefits.

Regarding **FY2025 appropriations**, we oppose the cuts in non-defense spending and especially reductions in poverty-important programs that are emerging from the work of the House Appropriations Committee. Notably, not meeting the Administration's request for WIC could mean that states won't have sufficient funds to serve all eligible women and children. We are also alarmed by the proposed cuts in international humanitarian and development assistance.

Finally, we are still urging the Senate's leadership to bring the House-approved, bipartisan expansion of the **Child Tax Credit** to the floor and pray that it can pass on a bipartisan basis and become law.

Poverty has increased since 2021. By various measures, the related problem of racism has also become more severe (see *God's Call to Action Against Poverty and Racism* at [circleofprotection.us](https://circleofprotection.us)). In poor countries struggling with conflict, a record number of people are suffering in famine and near-famine conditions.

God has blessed our nation abundantly, and we pray that our elected leaders will get our country and the world back on track toward ending hunger and poverty.

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