

**FOR IMMEDIATE  
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**Contacts:**

Chris Ford, **Bread for the World**, (202) 688-1077,  
[cford@bread.org](mailto:cford@bread.org)  
Tim McHugh, **FCNL**, (202) 903-2515, [media@fcnl.org](mailto:media@fcnl.org)

**Christian Leaders Call for a 2020 Budget that Invests in Families**

**Washington, D.C., July 24, 2019** – Christian leaders with the Circle of Protection today released the following statement on the 2020 budget:

“The Circle of Protection is an unprecedented coalition of leaders from all the families of Christianity. National budgets are moral documents, and we see the 2020 budget as a chance to strengthen opportunity for struggling families – housing and child care in this country, and investments to reduce the poverty and violence that are driving desperate families to our border. We ask the President and members of Congress across the political spectrum to spare the country yet another round of brinksmanship – and agree on a budget and appropriations that invest in opportunity for families who struggle to put food on the table.”

In March, Circle of Protection leaders [sent a letter to members of Congress](#) urging them to pass a bipartisan budget agreement that reverses harmful sequestration cuts and expands investments in critical programs serving people in poverty.

Statements from individual Circle of Protection leaders:

“We welcome the 2020 budget deal as a chance to strengthen the infrastructure of opportunity for millions of families who struggle to put food on the table. A bipartisan deal is better than a government shutdown, and Congress should use this framework to fund much needed assistance for child care, housing, and job training. They should also continue to invest in progress against world hunger – specifically, maintaining aid to Central America and appropriating \$250 million in programs that are reducing child malnutrition globally.” **Rev. David Beckmann, President, Bread for the World**

“We believe that God judges individuals and societies by how they respond to the needs of the poor. Our goal as Americans must be the elimination of poverty in our land. The proposed budget agreement avoids damaging cuts and allows for some increase in poverty-focused programs. We support this agreement and ask Congress and the President to approve it expeditiously. Moreover, we must continue to work towards eliminating hunger and poverty. Americans must have access to full-time work that offers a realistic escape from poverty, and to good and affordable health care.” **Rev. Carlos L. Malavé, Executive Director, Christian Churches Together**

“Active participation in public life and the duty of government to care for its people, especially the most vulnerable, have been part of the Lutheran movement from it

beginning. In his explanation of the petition 'Give us today our daily bread', Luther said: 'It would be therefore fitting if the coat of arms of every upright prince were emblazoned with a loaf of bread instead of a Lion' (Large Catechism). The Congress and Administration has now before it a responsibility to pass a 2020 bipartisan budget agreement that impacts the human realities of millions of people and families at home and our neighbors abroad. I urge our leaders to ensure that we as a nation embody the prudence and the dignity found in our 'daily bread' in the 21st Century we live in, until all are fed." **Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

"The Friends Committee on National Legislation has long advocated on behalf of those suffering under extreme poverty that creates barriers to affording housing, obtaining employment, and getting a good education. The current budget compromise between the president and the Congress includes critical funding for the non-defense side of the budget, a necessary and welcome development. It is critical that Congress prioritize these programs that address vital human needs in the appropriations process. We remain seriously disappointed by the continued nonstop growth in funding for defense. Spending untold billions year after year has not led to a safer America or world, and never will." **Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation**

"We are encouraged to see our leaders working together to craft an agreement on both the FY20 budget and the debt ceiling. As members of Congress now begin approving appropriations bills, we pray that they will prioritize protecting and assisting our most vulnerable citizens, as well as providing life-saving support to those threatened by famine, persecution, and extreme poverty throughout the world. God has blessed our nation with the resources to care for our neighbors in need, while also exercising fiscal discipline and addressing our debt and deficit issues." **Galen Carey, Vice President for Government Relations, National Association of Evangelicals**

"The Latino Evangelicals of the National Latino Evangelical Coalition stand committed to a budget that demonstrates a commitment to good financial stewardship and support for economically vulnerable communities and families." **Rev. Dr. Gabriel Salguero, President, National Latino Evangelical Coalition**

"At a time when people of color are under attack in various ways, the 2020 budget deal is likely to add billions of dollars to programs that are especially important in African-American, Latino, and Indigenous communities. We support this compromise budget framework and urge members of Congress to insist on priority for low-income programs, notably housing and child care, as decisions about specific appropriations are being made." **Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, President, Skinner Leadership Institute**

"As we have said many times before, a budget is a moral document. The gospel of Jesus Christ is good news for the poor and the Bible treats the moral test of a society around how it treats the poor. This deal ensures that the United States does not default on its debt obligations, averts deep and dangerous sequestration cuts, and increases funding

for non-defense discretionary programs while maintaining parity with increases in defense spending. While there are many positives to this agreement, we are concerned that the deal did not include additional revenue offsets through the closing of tax loopholes that disproportionately benefit the wealthy. Additionally, while suspending the debt ceiling until after the 2020 presidential election will ensure that the debt limit doesn't lead to unnecessary brinkmanship during this important upcoming election, we will work to ensure that commitments to fiscal responsibility held by many will be upheld and any considerations of additional spending under this agreement will favor programs that assist the millions of Americans living in and near to poverty." **Rev. Jim Wallis, President and Founder, Sojourners**

"We join with the rest of the Circle of Protection in urging Congress and the President to approve the compromise budget 2020 framework. It avoids deep cuts and allows for some much-needed increases in programs that provide help and opportunity to people in need in our country and around the world. This is consistent with our tradition's emphasis on holiness both in our personal lives and in how we behave as a society." **Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon, General Superintendent Emerita, The Wesleyan Church**

*The Circle of Protection is a coalition of many and diverse Christian leaders working together for help and opportunity for hungry and poor people in the United States and around the world. [www.circleofprotection.us](http://www.circleofprotection.us)*