



A Catholic Campaign Against Global Poverty



Take Action!

Urge Representatives to Support HR 2634, the *Jubilee Act*, to Relieve the Debt of Poor Countries!

REASON FOR THIS ALERT: Next week, during the Apostolic Visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the United States, the House of Representatives will likely consider the Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Expanded Debt Cancellation of 2007 (HR 2634) which represents an essential next step in alleviating the crushing burdens of debt that plague many developing countries. The timing is significant since the Holy See has been a strong supporter of debt relief.

TAKE ACTION NOW! Call your Representative today and urge support for the Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Expanded Debt Cancellation of 2007 (HR 2634).

BACKGROUND: While major progress has been made in reducing poor country debt, a substantial number of the poorest countries continue to shoulder heavy debt burdens that draw precious government resources away from critical investments in health care, education, water and other sectors necessary to improve lives.

Many poor countries have seen their debts reduced through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative that was adopted in 1996 and expanded in 1999 in response to successful advocacy by the global Jubilee 2000 movement, in which the Catholic Church played a major role. In the succeeding years, it became apparent that further efforts were required, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has continued to make important contributions to the debt cancellation effort that offers new hope to some of the world's poorest and most forgotten people.

FINISHING THE JOB: *The Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Expanded Debt Cancellation of 2007 (H.R. 2634)* would extend debt cancellation to virtually all very poor countries that have, or develop, financial management systems to assure that debt relief savings are used to reduce poverty. On April 3, 2008, the House Financial Services Committee approved HR 2634. The next step is consideration by the full House of Representatives which is likely to occur next week during the Apostolic Visit of Benedict XVI to the United States.

ACTION REQUESTED:

Encourage strong bipartisan support for passage of the Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Expanded Debt Cancellation of 2007. Call the Capitol Switchboard and ask to speak with your local Representative. Tell her or him to support HR 2634 when it comes up for a vote.

RESOURCES:

See action alerts and letters on the *Catholic Campaign Against Global Poverty* website of USCCB and CRS at www.usccb.org/globalpoverty. For more information contact: Gerry Flood, 202-541-3167 (phone), 202-541-3339 (fax); gfflood@usccb.org; and Fr. Andrew Small, OMI, 202-541-3153 (phone); asmall@usccb.org.