

September 7, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Co-chair  
Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling  
Co-chair  
Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Murray, Congressman Hensarling, and Members of the Committee:

As you begin your work on the new deficit reduction committee, I urge you to protect America's most vulnerable families. We know that there is pressure to cut programs, but we ask you to also look at the revenue side of the equation.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest association of professional social workers in the world with nearly 145,000 members. We work to promote the profession of social work and social justice. NASW has long advocated for a balanced approach to deficit reduction.

NASW supports revenue increases and cuts to programs that do not have an impact on low/moderate-income people. In addition, NASW urges the Super Committee to submit recommendations that include sufficient revenue increases to reduce the deficit while preserving our ability to create jobs, rebuild the economy, and protect vulnerable people from the loss of vital services. NASW offers the following recommendations for consideration on how best to bring our budget in balance:

- Cutting federal Medicaid funding, whether to benefits or eligibility or reduction in provider payments, hurt beneficiaries' access to care and pass costs onto families.
- Cutting federal funding for low-income programs like SNAP/Food Stamps and LIHEAP hit vulnerable families hardest.
- Raising Medicare's eligibility age to 67 would not only fail to constrain health care costs across the economy; it would increase them.
- Cutting Supplemental Security Income (SSI) would be devastating to seniors with disabilities.
- There are opportunities to increase revenues through closing loopholes and letting the Bush-era tax cuts expire.

As the Super Committee deliberates, NASW urges the members to support savings that are balanced and include tax based solutions.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH  
Executive Director