

Catholic Conference of Ohio

For Immediate Release

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Catholic Conference of Ohio expresses disappointment with state budget.

The state budget bill compromise (HB 1) will hurt persons who are poor and vulnerable and cut support for students attending Catholic schools.

Deep budget cuts remain in programs designed to help persons in need of elder care and child protective services. Children attend Catholic schools will feel the burden of a \$59 M reduction in resources and services.

According to Carolyn Jurkowitz, executive director for the Catholic Conference of Ohio, "These cuts in funding for students in chartered nonpublic schools, when added to cuts made to resources and services for those students in 2008/2009, undermine the education of thousands of Ohio's young people. Furthermore, they threaten to destabilize a system of schools that provides high quality education for hundreds of thousands of citizens in this state – and has done so reliably for 150 years. Chartered nonpublic schools save Ohio taxpayers close to \$2 billion every year."

Reduced will be funds that provide for guidance counselors, standardized testing, remedial reading and math, textbooks, speech and hearing therapy, school nurses, instructional supplies and equipment.

Director Jurkowitz estimates that a typical elementary school of 350 students will see its state-funded assistance reduced by \$50,000 in the fall, and a typical high school of 800 students will see its assistance reduced by \$114,000.

These cuts fall particularly hard on parents in economically disadvantaged areas, who cannot possibly afford to make up the lost revenue in increased tuition.

Director Jurkowitz also lamented the harm that will befall many vulnerable persons as a result passage of HB 1. "The \$250 M cut in public assistance has dismantled child protective services and needed jobs and training programs. Denying PASSPORT in-home care and community-based services to older Ohioans will harm many, many families and will result in increased reliance on costly nursing home care." [MORE]

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Jurkowitz reported that the Ohio Catholic bishops are on record as opposing slot machines and casino gambling. “Neither is in the best moral, social or economic interest of the people of Ohio.”

The Catholic Conference of Ohio is the official representative of the Catholic Church in public matters affecting the Church and the general welfare of the citizens of Ohio.

The Catholic Conference promotes the defense of all human life, from conception through natural death, care for the poor and vulnerable, and the promotion of the common good. The Catholic Church also provides direct care and education for Ohio’s citizens through numerous schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and social service agencies.
