

**No. R-95. Joint resolution urging Congress to retain federal community services block grant funding for the balance of fiscal year 2011 at its current operating level.**

(J.R.H.12)

Offered by: Representatives Haas of Rochester, Burke of Brattleboro, Cheney of Norwich, Davis of Washington, Donahue of Northfield, Frank of Underhill, French of Randolph, Hooper of Montpelier, McFaun of Barre Town, Mrowicki of Putney, Pearson of Burlington, Stevens of Waterbury, Taylor of Barre City and Wizowaty of Burlington

Whereas, Public Law 111-322 funds the federal government only through March 4, 2011, and

Whereas, the United States House of Representatives has passed H.R. 1, the continuing resolution that appropriates money to fund the federal government for the balance of FY 2011 starting on March 5 and concluding on September 30, and

Whereas, the bill proposes many drastic federal funding reductions in essential support programs for the most needy Americans, and

Whereas, among the most devastating of the proposed funding cuts is a \$300 million reduction in the community services block grant that translates into an estimated loss in Vermont of close to \$2 million in funds for community action agencies which help low income Vermonters move out of poverty and become economically self-sufficient, and

Whereas, because the federal fiscal year will have considerably progressed by March 5, the proposed reduction for the CSBG appropriation in H.R. 1 will result in the termination of federal funding for the agencies' programs for the balance of the FY 2011 fiscal year, and

Whereas, according to Central Vermont Community Action Council Executive Director Hal Cohen, each dollar in federal support leverages another \$20, meaning the federal reduction will lead to an additional loss of \$40 million to the agencies, and

Whereas, the Central Vermont Community Action Council would lose \$320,000 in federal funds and would be forced to close a number of local offices and to lay off 16–20 staff members, and the federal funding shortfall will result in Lamoille, Orange, and Washington County residents having less access to food shelves, housing counseling, and crisis fuel assistance, and

Whereas, the lives of the low income clients who receive services from each of the Vermont community action agencies: including: Community Action in Southwestern Vermont, Central Vermont Community Action Council, Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity, Northeast Kingdom Community Action, and Southeastern Vermont Community Action will be severely impacted by these programmatic cutbacks to an extent that may extend beyond mere fiscal calculations, and

Whereas, it is essential to the lives of thousands of Vermonters that the FY 2011 federal funding for the CSBG not be reduced for the balance of the current fiscal year, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly strongly urges Congress to retain federal community services block grant funding at its current operating level for the balance of fiscal year 2011, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to each of the Vermont community action agencies and to the Vermont Congressional Delegation.