



For Immediate Release

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New Poll Reveals Widespread Public Support for Programs Aiding Low-Income and Out-of-Work Americans

Majority of respondents back funding for critical human needs programs, rejecting conservative deficit arguments

Click [here](#) for memo from Hart Research Associate Detailing Poll Results

Washington, D.C.—A new poll conducted by Hart Research Associates reveals strong public support for human needs programs that aid low-income and jobless Americans. The poll, commissioned by the Half in Ten campaign, shows overwhelming support for the TANF Emergency Fund, with 79 percent of respondents answering in favor of continuing this successful job-creation engine.

The TANF Emergency Fund has allowed states to partner with the private sector to create more than 250,000 subsidized jobs for low-income and long-term unemployed workers in more than 35 states across the country. Commanding broad support from Democratic and Republican governors, small business owners, and economists, the TANF Emergency Fund has not only helped feed hungry children in the summer months or help keep struggling families in their homes but it has also moved low-income parents from welfare to work and enabled small businesses to grow in this tough economic climate.

Since the program has been allowed to lapse on September 30 most states have been forced to terminate or greatly scale back their subsidized employment programs. To Melissa Boteach, Half in Ten Campaign Manager at the Center for American Progress Action Fund, the consequences of the program's expiration are clear. "Allowing this important program to disappear means more layoffs, a rise in welfare caseloads, and more suffering this holiday season. Congress should authorize the program for one more year before the end of the lame duck session."

The poll also revealed that a vast majority of Americans are against cutting important human needs programs as a deficit reduction strategy. In fact, 78 percent of respondents felt that Congress should find other ways to reduce the deficit, with 65 percent of respondents indicating they "felt strongly" about the need for Congress to find other deficit reduction methods than cutting programs that are helping the most vulnerable families weather this recession.

Deborah Weinstein, executive director of the Coalition on Human Needs, a Half in Ten partner, believes that these poll results could not have come at a more critical time. "With a proposal from

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House Republicans on the table to slash nonsecurity discretionary spending by more than 20 percent, low-income families have much to lose. The poll results clearly show that Americans do not support reducing the deficit on the backs of our most vulnerable families and children.”

Should nonsecurity discretionary spending—a part of the federal budget which houses programs for education, human services, transportation, medical research, and law enforcement—be cut by more than 20 percent, poor children and seniors would be among those feeling the direct impact of cuts to these essential programs.

These numbers are no surprise considering another of the poll’s findings. Approximately half of all Americans have a close family member who is poor. “The Great Recession has left a disaster in its wake, threatening the economic security of millions of families,” said Wade Henderson, president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a Half in Ten partner. “The American public spoke clearly that they want Congress to invest in creating jobs. Cutting off a successful jobs creation program and slashing investments in education and human services is not the path to rebuild our middle class.”

The Hart Research Associates poll interviewed 802 registered voters across the country from November 5–8, 2010, with a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent for the full sample. Click [here](#) for the Hart Research Associates memo on the results.