



**Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton
State Budget FY'09
Advocacy Agenda**

Catholic Charities supports, and asks for legislative support, for the following initiatives in Governor Corzine's proposed FY'09 budget:

- **\$15 million for the State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP)** to bring it to a total of \$52.5 million, providing subsidies to low income individuals and households to enable them to live in market rate housing.
- **\$60.9 million for community placement costs** for the Division of Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health Services in the Department of Human Services, to assist people ready to transition into community residences from hospitals and institutions.
- **\$ 40.6 million to annualize the Cost of Living increase** for Community Service Providers. This does not include a new Cost of Providing Care increase for the upcoming year. *We will continue to demonstrate to the Governor and the Legislature the need for a 3.6% increase* to enable providers to meet the needs of the community.

Catholic Charities is concerned about the following budget proposals that would negatively impact the poor and vulnerable, and will advocate for legislative support to eliminate, or reduce the impact, of these proposals:

- **Medicaid Co-Pays**, which would harm the most vulnerable New Jerseyans and will not result in actual savings to the state.
- **Renters Rebate Rollback**, which is slated to be cut 50%. The proposed decrease would fall entirely on the lowest income tenants.
- **Charity Care**, with a proposed \$108 million cut, would impact the accessibility of medical care for low-income people.

Catholic Charities requests serious consideration, by the Governor and Legislature, of the following priorities not addressed in the proposed budget:

- **A 10% increase in Work First New Jersey monthly assistance payments**, to bring participants closer to economic security. These payments have not been raised in 21 years.
- **\$45 million to reopen the Family Care Program** to parents of minor children with family incomes to 200% of the federal poverty line.
- **\$6 million for Emergency Food Assistance**, as the demand food assistance continues to grow. Additional funding over the current \$4 million would bring the state funded total to \$10 million.

Catholic Charities...Renewing Lives, Restoring Hope