



100 Days of Action Week 5 Action Alert

"Now is the time to act boldly and wisely – to not only revive this economy, but to build a new foundation for lasting prosperity." *President Barack Obama, Feb. 24, 2009*

The Economic Stimulus Bill was a down payment on the kind of bold change our country needs, but fixing our economy means fixing the inequality that is at the root of this economic crisis. We must press for change at all levels: locally, statewide, and nationally. The road to bold change requires that we take bold steps. Two steps to take this week:

Bold Step # 1: Stop Foreclosures and End Predatory Banking:

10,000 families are losing their homes everyday. Banks and bankers have been allowed to prey on people, pushing bad mortgages with extreme interest rates so they can make obscene profits and fly on private jets. But this is only the tip of the iceberg. The average American family is drowning in debt and now owes an average of \$10,000 to the credit card industry. Credit card companies don't care if the money gets paid back because they have increased their interest rates and fees – \$85 billion is now owed in interest and fees alone. This isn't real debt – it's predatory and it's hurting families *and* the economy.

Urgent Action Needed:

Call Congressman Neal 413.785.0325 (Springfield, Northampton)
Call Congressman Olver 413.532.7010 (Holyoke, Westfield, Amherst, Greenfield)

Sample Message: "My name is ____ from the Alliance to Develop Power / ADP. I urge Congressman ____ to invest in families and communities. Please support the Obama Housing Affordability and Stability Plan *and* HR 1106 – the Helping Families Save their Homes Act of 2009. These bills are key steps in creating an economy that works for everyone. Thank you.

Bold Step # 2: Address Inequity in Massachusetts:

The Economic Stimulus bill will create 3.5 million jobs nationally and 80,000 in Massachusetts. But there is no guarantee these jobs will reach the people who are hurting the most -- low-income people, people of color, youth, and women. It's up to Governor Patrick to address the increasing racial and economic disparities in Massachusetts by requiring 15% of the jobs created by the stimulus bill be set aside for our families and for our distressed communities.

Urgent Action Needed:

Write a Letter to the Editor or **Sign onto the Letter below by placing your name on the signature sheet.**

Please report your Action to the ADP office 413.739.7233 - jon@a-dp.org - or to your 100 Days Captain.
Visit us online at www.a-dp.org.



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To the Editor:

The Economic Stimulus Bill was a down payment on the kind of bold change our country needs and wants, but it is not enough. Fixing our economy means fixing the inequality that is at the root of this economic crisis.

We've heard the numbers, but have we looked at what is behind them? Unemployment is double what it was last year. The rate nationally is now 7.6%. But for Latinos it is 9.75 % and for African Americans it is 12.6%. Massachusetts is no different.

Springfield, like other small cities in Massachusetts, is reaching a crisis point. Industry, jobs, and population are declining while unemployment and poverty are increasing. Our infrastructure is deteriorating and our tax base is declining. We are home to a neighborhood with one of the highest rates of concentrated poverty in the United States -- where the poverty rate is at almost 60 % and the unemployment rate hovers at 20 %.

But numbers don't tell the whole story. There is energy and innovation in our neighborhoods. People who care for each other and who believe in shared responsibility and shared sacrifice. Who are committed to family and community, who recognize that every human being has inherent value.

Inequality can only be addressed if communities left out in the past are lifted up in the future. That means real investment. It is estimated that the Economic Stimulus bill will bring over 85,000 jobs to the Commonwealth. Can we ensure these jobs make it to low-income people and distressed communities like Springfield?

The Governor's Workforce Task Force on Stimulus Funding recently declined to address inequity and refused to recommend a set aside of 15 % of the jobs created for the people and communities that are hurting the most in this economic crisis. Now the choice rests with the Governor himself.

As President Obama said in his address to the Congress and the Nation on Tuesday, "Now is the time to act boldly and wisely – to not only revive this economy, but to build a new foundation for lasting prosperity." Governor Patrick – we believe in you. Act Boldly and Wisely.

Sincerely,

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