



Iowa
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IFP: Protect Vulnerable Americans in Deficit Plans

The Iowa Fiscal Partnership today released the following [public statement](#) from Charles Bruner, executive director of the Child & Family Policy Center, regarding deficit reduction discussions in Washington:

The Iowa Fiscal Partnership endorses efforts to keep poverty prevention at the forefront of all discussions about national deficit reduction. Many national groups, ranging from the Alliance to End Hunger, to the United Way, this week called upon Congress and the White House in a [public letter](#) to recognize the historically bipartisan commitment to protect core low-income programs from drastic cuts in efforts to reduce deficits.

In its letter, the coalition of organizations seeks congressional leaders and the President to commit anew to that principle, which also was noted by the Bowles-Simpson National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform.

We have seen in the debate in Washington a wide range of views on how best to achieve a long-term sustainable federal budget. We would repeat what we have said for years on both state and federal budget practices: A responsible approach is a balanced approach, one that recognizes there is not a solution to be found on just one side of the budget ledger. Services for people struggling in the recovery from a devastating economic downturn are the last place to turn for cuts. They hit people least able to fend for themselves, and — importantly — they further delay the overall recovery.

As the coalition letter points out all major deficit reduction packages of the last two decades have protected the most vulnerable from budget cuts. “Indeed, the 1990, 1993, and 1997 deficit reduction packages, which improved the Earned Income Tax Credit, strengthened the SNAP program or created the Children’s Health Insurance Program, show that reducing poverty and expanding effective low-income assistance programs is fully consistent with deficit reduction,” the letter noted.

IFP is in full agreement with the coalition that there is a real need to get the United States on a sustainable budget course, and that history shows it can and should be done without driving more Americans into poverty or causing undue pain and hardship. These are more than bipartisan principles. They reflect nonpartisan, American values and they deserve a place at the front of budget discussions, to be met as a condition for agreement.

Children are the most vulnerable in recessions, as poverty is highest among children and research shows that even temporary stays in poverty have damaging long-term impacts on children’s overall health, education and safety. Federal funding plays a key role in ensuring that children’s basic needs are met so they have the opportunity to develop and succeed.

The Iowa Fiscal Partnership is a joint budget and tax policy initiative of two nonpartisan, Iowa-based organizations, the Iowa Policy Project in Iowa City and the Child & Family Policy Center in Des Moines.

The Iowa Policy Project
www.iowapolicyproject.org

CHILD & FAMILY POLICY CENTER
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