



Circle of Protection  
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# Press Release

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## Presidential Candidates Tell Christian Leaders How They Will Address High Poverty Numbers

**Washington, D.C., Sept. 12, 2012** – As the U.S. Census Bureau releases its annual poverty figures, faith leaders from the Circle of Protection will release exclusive videos from President Barack Obama and Governor Mitt Romney stating their positions on hunger and poverty.

“As Christian leaders, we believe that this presidential campaign should include a clear focus on what each candidate proposes to do to provide help and opportunity for hungry and poor people in the United States and around the world. We are grateful that the candidates have produced these videos that outline their positions on this crucial issue,” the Christian leaders wrote in a letter requesting the videos.

The Circle of Protection leaders represent a wide array of Christian churches throughout the country. The group emphasizes that God holds nations accountable for how they treat those Jesus called “the least of these” (Matthew 25:45).

Leaders who will speak at the press conference include **Bishop Stephen Blaire** (chair, committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, US Conference of Catholic Bishops), **Rev. Michael Livingston** (former president, National Council of Churches), **Dr. Barbara Williams Skinner** (co-facilitator, National African-American Clergy Network), **Rev. David Beckmann** (president, Bread for the World), **Rev. Jim Wallis** (president, Sojourners), **Rev. Gabriel Salguero** (president, National Latino Evangelical Coalition) and **Galen Carey** (vice-president, National Association of Evangelicals).

Speakers will discuss the latest poverty figures, which show that in 2011, more than one in seven Americans or 46.2 million people lived in poverty—including more than 16 million children.

“Though we may disagree on other issues, we are united in our belief that God is especially concerned with the plight of poor and vulnerable people. Our churches are deeply involved in serving people in need,” the leaders wrote in their letter to the two presidential candidates.”

For more than a year, leaders of various Christian denominations and agencies have come together to advocate for a “Circle of Protection” around funding for programs that are vital to vulnerable people in the United States and around the world.

The Circle of Protection is composed of more than 65 heads of denominations, relief and development agencies, and other Christian organizations. The videos can be viewed at [www.circleofprotection.us/elections](http://www.circleofprotection.us/elections)

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