



CIRCLE *of* PROTECTION

The Urgency of Continued COVID-19 Relief

Statement by the Circle of Protection Steering Committee

October 19, 2020

The Circle of Protection is a coalition of church leaders representing the diversity of U.S. Christianity. It includes Latino Churches, Historic Black Churches, Protestants and Evangelicals, Catholics and Orthodox, Pentecostals and Peace Churches. One thing on which we all agree is that our country's policies should reflect Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25 about how we should treat "the least of these."

We call on the President and Congress to approve this month a COVID relief package that prioritizes those most in need at home and abroad.

We welcome the extension of the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (P-EBT) in the Continuing Appropriations Act of 2021. Since P-EBT went into effect this spring, it has lifted at least three million children out of hunger.

But no comprehensive COVID legislation has been enacted for over six months, and we are facing a hunger crisis.

In our country, 1 in 3 families with children do not have enough food to eat, with nearly 40 percent of Black and Latino families with children struggling to put food on the table.

Worldwide, an estimated 270 million people are on the brink of starvation.

"Whoever is kind to the needy honors God." (Proverbs 14:31).

Sincerely,

Circle of Protection Steering Committee Members

John Ashmen, President, Citygate Network

John Carr, Director, Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life, Georgetown University

Paul Baxley, Executive Coordinator, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Dr. Iva Carruthers, General Secretary, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference



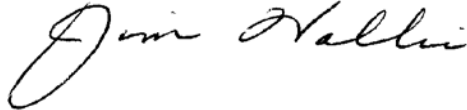
Rev. Eugene Cho, President, and *Rev. David Beckmann, President Emeritus, Bread for the World



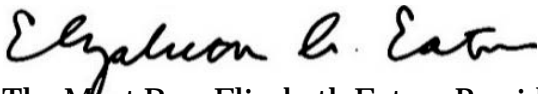
Rev. Lori Tapia, National Pastor for Hispanic Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church



* Rev. Jim Wallis, President and Founder, Sojourners



The Most Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Rev. Cecilia J. Williams, President, Christian Community Development Association



Walter Kim, President, National Association of Evangelicals



* Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, Co-Convener, National African American Clergy Network and President, Skinner Leadership Institute



* Rev. Carlos Malavé, Executive Director, Christian Churches Together U.S.A. (in his personal capacity)



Jim Winkler, President and General Secretary, National Council of Churches



Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation

* *Circle of Protection Steering Committee Co-Coordinator*s are marked with an asterisk



Dr. Gabriel Salguero, President, National Latino Evangelical Coalition