

Assistance for Low-Income Families

President Bush is committed to the goal of building a more compassionate America through our Nation's long tradition of helping individuals, families, and communities most in need. The President also believes that faith-based and community groups should be unleashed to help transform the lives of our neighbors by addressing many of our Nation's most challenging social problems, one step and one act of kindness at a time.

Since 2001, President Bush has:

- Signed into law the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit. Low-income beneficiaries are receiving \$600 this year – and a total of \$1,200 over the next 18 months – as part of the drug card to help them purchase their medicines at discounted prices before the permanent Medicare drug benefit takes effect. The comprehensive drug benefit, which begins in 2006, provides additional assistance to low-income beneficiaries and eventually over 12 million beneficiaries will be receiving it;
- Overseen the expansion and enhancement of Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) eligibility and benefits to cover over 2.6 million people. The Administration also started the Health Insurance Flexibility and Accountability Initiative, which offers coverage to 175,000 people (with 585,000 more enrollees expected);
- Signed legislation restoring and extending the use of over \$2 billion in unspent State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) funds;
- Restored food stamp eligibility to hundreds of thousands of legal immigrants who have been in the country for five years;
- Worked with Congress to provide marriage penalty relief and simplification relating to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC);
- Expanded the 10% bracket and doubled the child tax credit to benefit low-income Americans:
 - Nearly 5 million taxpayers, including 4 million taxpayers with children, will have their income tax liability completely eliminated in 2004;
 - Low-income families will also benefit from provisions that make the child credit refundable for more families and reduce marriage penalties caused by the Earned Income Tax Credit;
- Created the Health Centers Initiative, which is creating 1,200 new and expanded health center sites to serve an additional 6.1 million low-income and uninsured people by 2006. Since 2001, the number of persons served in health centers has increased by almost 30% to 13.2 million;
- Fully funded the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program to serve all eligible persons seeking to participate;

- Provided \$100 million to expand access to effective drug treatment through the Access to Recovery vouchers initiative. This initiative will increase access to and provide consumer choice among effective substance abuse treatment programs, including those operated by faith-based and community providers;
- Approved \$60 million to provide mentoring by caring adults to children with parents in prison;
- Signed the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act to help the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) serve more children by allowing direct certification for children who live in families that qualify for other assistance programs such as Medicaid, and allowing private and faith-based organizations to participate in feeding programs. Also, USDA is providing grants to help increase awareness of the Food Stamp Program for low-income households;
- Established the Compassion Capital Fund with \$113 million to fund public/private partnerships supporting charitable organizations in expanding or emulating model social service programs; and
- Established the American Dream Downpayment Initiative and signed into law \$75 million in FY 2003 and \$87 million in FY 2004 to help approximately 40,000 families a year with their downpayment and closing costs.

The President's FY 2005 Budget builds on the success of the previous three years. It includes:

- A proposal for a five-year extension of Medicaid benefits for families transitioning from welfare to work. Also, statutory modifications allow for consistent enrollment for beneficiaries;
- A proposed tax credit to help lower-income Americans purchase health insurance;
- A one-year extension of Medicaid payment of Medicare Part B premiums for low-income beneficiaries;
- Assistance for low-income refugees by allowing refugees and asylees to receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for 8 years after entry into the country;
- A \$1 billion, or 8.1% increase, for Title I education funding for low-income, disadvantaged students. At the requested level, Title I funding to local education agencies will increase by \$4.6 billion, or 52%, since the President took office;
- Providing an estimated 5.3 million students (a 25% increase in recipients since the 2001-2002 school year) up to \$4,050 in grant aid to help meet the cost of postsecondary education by requesting \$12.9 billion for Federal Pell Grants;
- \$70 million for the Samaritan Initiative, a new competitive grant program to provide permanent housing with supportive services for the chronically homeless;

- An additional \$100 million to double the number of individuals receiving substance abuse treatment through the Access To Recovery program;
- \$23 billion in Federal resources for job training and employment assistance. This amount includes Federal Pell Grants for students at technical and two-year postsecondary schools, who are eligible for up to \$4,050 in grant aid to help meet the cost of postsecondary education;
- \$670 million for a Marriage and Healthy Family Development effort comprised of new and existing programs, to promote marriage and healthy family development; and
- A four-year, \$300 million Prisoner Re-entry Initiative to help returning prisoners rebuild their lives, find work, and avoid crime.

For Other Information About the President's Accomplishments and Proposals:

FY 2005 Budget

Department of Agriculture: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2005/agriculture.html>

Department of Education: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2005/education.html>

Department of Health & Human Services: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2005/hhs.html>

Dept. of Housing & Urban Development: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2005/hud.html>

Department of Treasury: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2005/treasury.html>

Compassion

The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/compassionate/>

Education

The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/earlychildhood/>

The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/education/>

Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml?src=fb>

Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/>

Department of Health and Human Services: <http://www.hhs.gov/fbci/>

Department of Housing and Urban Development: <http://www.hud.gov/initiatives/fbci/index.cfm>

Health Care

The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/healthcare/>

Home Ownership

The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/homeownership/>

Dept. of Housing & Urban Development: <http://www.hud.gov/initiatives/homeownership/index.cfm>

Medicare

The White House: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/medicare/>