

Fiscal Year 2018 Federal Budget

Ensure a Budget that Protects Our Most Vulnerable

The President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 budget request proposed large increases in defense, national security, and immigration enforcement spending while reducing or eliminating funding for programs generally targeted toward low-income and rural populations, climate change, and non-defense foreign aid. Congress will likely approve a short-term continuing resolution to fund the federal government through December when the current funding measure expires on September 30, 2017. Between September and December, we expect an intense fight over the FY 2018 funding package.

The House has already released a budget blueprint that proposes to increase Defense programs by \$72 billion while cutting \$4.4 trillion over 10 years from key programs, such as Medicaid and Medicare, nutrition and housing assistance for low-income children and families, and humanitarian aid.

JCPA urges its local affiliates to work with lawmakers to pass a budget providing equal opportunity to all and uplifting the needs of our national's most vulnerable. This year JCPA worked with its coalition partners in the Washington Interreligious Staff Community (WISC) Working Group to produce [a "Faithful Budget" that reflects our commitment to serving and safeguarding all segments of society.](#)

- **The FY 2018 budget must protect our most vulnerable.** It is critical that Congress maintain adequate funding for anti-poverty programs, such as nutrition and housing assistance; humanitarian aid and foreign assistance; environmental protection; and refugee resettlement.
- **All Americans deserve the security of being able to sustain basic living standards.** Vital social safety net programs, such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, federal nutrition assistance programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), unemployment insurance, and refundable tax credits for low-income people, should be protected and improved. Cutting Social Security by slashing Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) would be devastating for people with disabilities and seniors. The Jewish community has a strong commitment to protecting the most vulnerable among us by fully funding social programs as part of our overall commitment and strategy to reduce poverty.
- **Fighting hunger is critical.** Food insecurity is one of the most acute hardships many Americans, including children, face across the country. Slashing federal nutrition assistance would leave millions of people, including children, seniors, people with disabilities, and jobless individuals unable to purchase adequate and nutritious food. We believe feeding America's hungry is not a political decision, but a moral one.
- **Every American, regardless of income, is entitled to a safe, affordable home, and the federal government bears primary responsibility, working with state and local governments, to ensure housing is available to all who need it.** Attempts to shift responsibility for social service funding either to the private sector or to the states through block grants and funding cuts place an unacceptable burden on many states already facing fiscal crisis.

- **Congress must maintain international programs that focus on helping developing nations secure basic human rights for their people, including access to education and the elimination of hunger, particularly among children.** In the face of an unprecedented refugee crisis and growing famine in East Africa, it is essential that we maintain funding for refugee resettlement and humanitarian assistance.
- **All people have the right to live and work in environments with clean air, land, water, and food.** The federal government must ensure that all communities have equal access to environmental clean-up programs and equal protection from environmental hazards, regardless of income, race, or ethnicity. Significant cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency would deeply impact the agency's ability to protect public health, including monitoring the safety of drinking water systems.
- **Climate change is an international security threat and one of the greatest moral issues of our time.** Congress must ensure that programs that promote renewable energy and combat climate change have the resources to continue this important work.