



September 4, 2025

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Ranking Member  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Honorable Members of Congress:

I am writing on behalf of Catholic Charities USA to request funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) programs and operations, which are essential for supporting vulnerable populations, including disaster-affected communities, individuals experiencing financial hardship, survivors of human trafficking, and others who depend on this assistance. DHS plays a vital role in providing essential support, resources, and expertise to these communities. The agency needs full funding to continue this important work.

CCUSA represents a network of 168 independent Catholic Charities agencies that are working to reduce poverty and serve vulnerable communities in 50 states and five U.S. territories. For decades, the agencies have collaborated with the government at all levels to respond to various challenges in communities. Last year, the dedicated staff and volunteers of Catholic Charities served over 16 million people, and we are steadfast in our dedication to carrying out these ministries. We are deeply grateful for the government's continued collaboration and support in this work.

#### **Disaster Preparedness and Recovery**

As the frequency and severity of natural disasters and other emergencies continue to rise, the resulting effects on communities nationwide have become increasingly devastating. Our joint efforts with federal, state, and local authorities have enabled us to provide crucial assistance to affected communities, including food, emergency shelter, comprehensive case management, financial assistance, and much more, reaching approximately 500,000 people through 70 disasters per year. It is imperative to increase funding for FEMA to enhance its capabilities and ensure the availability of essential resources for disaster mitigation and response.

#### **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services**

Additionally, please prioritize increasing funding for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). For years, the immigration process has been burdened by a significant case backlog, staffing shortages, and operational challenges, resulting in prolonged wait times for individuals and families seeking immigration benefits. These lengthy wait times leave applicants and petitioners in limbo regarding their immigration status and hinder their ability to support themselves, as many benefits are tied to their legal work status. Timely processing of immigration benefit requests is essential for individuals to receive the necessary results, allowing them to plan their next steps in life. Despite USCIS's best efforts to address these issues, it is clear that additional support from Congress is needed to ensure that the agency has the resources to effectively and efficiently manage immigration services.

### **Emergency Food and Shelter Program**

We firmly advocate for increased funding for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) to ensure that localities across the country can effectively respond to people in their communities who are experiencing financial difficulties and cannot afford housing, food, or utilities. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress, approximately "771,480 people experienced homelessness in the United States, the largest number since data collection began and an overall increase of 19 percent since 2007." The National Energy Assistance Directors Association states on its August 2024 Energy Hardship Report that utility "arrearages that had been declining have risen by 8.4 percent since December 2023 to \$17.4 billion across 17.4 million households." Every day, Catholic Charities member agencies across the country receive requests for food assistance, emergency shelter, utility payments, and other urgent needs from the community. Private donations alone fall significantly short of meeting the urgent needs our communities face, especially as unemployment rises and inflation continues to soar. It is imperative for Congress to fund this program, as it supports a nearly 40-year partnership between the government and community service organizations that effectively addresses these critical local challenges.

### **Nonprofit Security Grant Program**

Catholic Charities is committed to carrying out its ministries in fulfillment of the gospel mandate while ensuring the safety of the people it serves, as well as its staff and volunteers. In response to the heightened threat of violence and harassment faced by Catholic Charities member agencies and other organizations engaged in faith-driven ministries, we request flat funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program to enable these organizations to strengthen security measures at various service locations.

In closing, we express our deep gratitude for your invaluable service to our country. We look forward to our continued collaboration to better meet the pressing needs of vulnerable neighbors.

Sincerely,



Kerry Alys Robinson  
CEO, Catholic Charities USA

cc: Honorable Members of the United States Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives