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CABHN FEVER



Reed Smith: Leader for Social Justice

Reed Smith, peace and civil rights activist and former member of the CABHN Steering Committee, died July 21 at age 86.

Reed loved life, and he loved people. He brought good cheer everywhere. He also brought principled ideas and he stood behind them. War, racism and injustice were unacceptable for Reed.

Born and raised in Connecticut, he worked as an economist in Waterbury. He helped form the first integrated housing development in Waterbury in the 1950s. He marched with Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. During the Vietnam War he counseled draftees about conscience objection. In the 1980s he helped found a soup kitchen.

In New Haven since 1991, Reed was a Tax the Rich candidate for State Representative and founding member of the Coalition to End Child Poverty. As director of Interfaith Cooperative Ministries (ICM), he initiated an interracial dialog and annual service on Martin Luther King's birthday. He served on the City of New Haven Peace Commission for a decade.

Reed was widely known and loved for his perseverance, optimism, vision and generosity. He will be missed!

Excerpted from 9/2011 Progressive Action Roundtable

Don't Wait! Apply Now for Energy Assistance!

Energy assistance applications are currently being accepted, although benefits will not be available until November 15th (i.e., no oil or other deliverable fuel deliveries will be covered or authorized before this date). To find out where to apply, contact Infoline 211 or the DSS energy hotline: 1-800-842-1132.

Resource on Criminal Justice System for People with Mental Illness

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)—Connecticut Chapter and Connecticut Appleseed have released a new resource called "Understanding the Criminal Justice System: A guide for adults with mental illness, advocates, and families." The goal of the document is to help parents and adults with mental illness understand Connecticut's criminal justice system as it relates to those 18 and up who have a mental illness. NAMI-CT and CT Appleseed felt it was important for people experiencing a mental illness or who have a loved one with a mental illness to understand the criminal justice system. The guide seeks to help educate families as to their loved one's rights so they can make informed decisions regarding attorneys. The resource also defines a list of commonly-used legal terms and offers a list of resources for families. To download the document: http://ctappleseed.org/pdfs/707/mh_handbook.pdf.

Bridgeport Area Community Resource Guide Available

Greater Bridgeport Continuum of Care releases Community Resource Guide that provides a list of resources and services available to those in the Bridgeport area. The guide addresses issues such as medical care, low-income housing, food assistance, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and legal assistance among others. For more information, visit <http://www.unitedwaycfc.org/continuum-care> or call Sherry Ashkins at (203) 339 – 6343.

STRIDE Sponsors Winter Coat Drive



STRIDE, Quinebaug Valley Community College, and Gateway Community College are having a coat drive to help children with incarcerated parents. They are accepting donations of new coats for infants through age 18. Donations can be dropped off at the following locations:

- ✓ STRIDE office at QVCC's Danielson campus
- ✓ STRIDE office at Gateway Community College North Haven campus
- ✓ QVCC's Willimantic Center
- ✓ WINY Radio in Putnam

Accepting donations from now until December 12, 2011. For more information, please call the STRIDE office at (860) 412-7442.

RELEASE – A Reentry News Resource

Please sign up for your FREE subscription to RELEASE, an informative online student news collaborative focusing on the impact of incarceration in CT. It is produced entirely by students at Central Connecticut State University and sponsored by CCSU's Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy. The first two "issues" focused on employment and housing. This month has articles on children of incarcerated parents. To subscribe, go to: <http://releasenews.org>

Reminder!
*Diaper Bank's Annual
 Rock Your Baby 2011
 when & where?
 Thursday, October 27, 2011
 6:30PM to 9:00PM
 At The Old Guitar Store
 Foundry Square
 153 East Street
 New Haven, CT*



Transit-Access for Low-Income Households and the "Job Connection"

This past August, the Brookings Institute released a report titled *Transit Access and Zero-Vehicle Households*, documenting access to transit and jobs for Americans in the biggest metropolitan areas in the United States. This complemented a previous report *Missed Opportunity* which found that many cities face a transit paradox where public transportation is readily available but fails to connect residents to jobs. The report observed the effects of income on automobile ownership, the dispersion of zero-vehicle households, and job access relative to transportation access.

In the 100 largest metropolitan areas, 7.5 million people, about 10 percent, lack a private automobile. A majority of these households live in the country's seven largest metropolitan areas with New York hosting 28 percent of all zero-vehicle households. Although there are a variety of reasons these households lack a car, most do not purchase one due to economic constraints. In the metropolitan areas about 60 percent of zero-vehicle households have incomes below 80% of the median income for their metro areas.

Over 90% of zero-vehicle households in the metropolitan areas studied have access to some form of transit service. Proximity to transit varies by region with the Northeast boasting the highest access rates (96.2 percent) while the South has the lowest (79.7 percent). The 8 metropolitan areas with the lowest accessibility have less than 60 percent transit access for their residents (Greenville, SC is the only area with

less than 50 percent). While most of the largest metropolitan areas provide transit access to their residents, about 700,000 households lack both transit and automobile access.

The report found that about 40% of zero-vehicle households can reach about 40% of metro-wide jobs within 90 minutes while that number is 29% for households with a vehicle. The report attributed the difference to the hub and spoke design in transit systems and the higher overall job and population density in cities. This statistic also varies by region with the Northeast providing 44.4 percent job access to zero-vehicle households, and the South providing about 33.1 percent job access. A metro's performance for job access for zero-vehicle households also works as a predictor for job access to households with a vehicle.

The report concluded that public policy should expand access to transit for those neighborhoods that lack it. It also stressed the importance of understanding the demographics and geography of a neighborhood so that public transportation connects residents to jobs.

Information for this article was taken from:

Tomer, Adie. "Transit Access and Zero-Vehicle Households." Metropolitan Policy Program. Aug. 2011.

Article by Ali Sina Moravej, University of Connecticut, Urban Semester Intern



State Helps Low-Income Families Spay/Neuter Pets

The Department of Social Services is partnering with the Department of Agriculture to help low-income households afford the cost of spaying/neutering and vaccinating their pets.

The Department of Agriculture's Animal Population Control Program can provide up to two spay/neuter vouchers for your pet(s) per eligible household.

The voucher provides up to \$50 for a male cat, \$70 for a female cat, \$100 for a male dog and \$120 for a female dog. The voucher also provides for one rabies and one distemper combination vaccination available ONLY when the pet is spayed or neutered.

To qualify, you must currently receive assistance from one of the following DSS programs:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Family Assistance, State Administered General Assistance, Medicaid (including Medicaid for Low-Income Adults and HUSKY A), State Supplement for the Aged, Blind and Disabled or Care4Kids. Please fill out the Low-Income Pet Sterilization Application and the Permission to Determine Eligibility forms and mail them to:

**Animal Population Control Program
Room G-8A
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford CT 06106**

To access these forms and for other information, go to:

<http://www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?Q=482364&A=2345>



Yale Website Helps to Explain School Food Labyrinth

The Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity has launched a website for parents and advocates with resources about food policy and schools as well as tools for working with local school districts on wellness initiatives. The website is www.RuddSPARK.org. "SPARK" stands for Supporting Parent Advocates with Resources and Knowledge. The site helps explain the complexities of selling and serving food in school to help parents gain knowledge of the system and, therefore, better advocate for change.

Summary of Next Steps on the Federal Debt Limit – What’s the Super Committee’s Job?

As you probably know, under the Budget Control Act of 2011, the federal debt limit was raised in August with accompanying limits on discretionary federal spending over the next ten years. The law passed in August also contains somewhat complicated procedures to permit a further increase of up to \$1.5 trillion in the debt limit.

Leaders of the House and Senate have appointed 12 members to a new Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (the “Super Committee”). The goal of the Committee is to identify ways to reduce the federal deficit by \$1.5 trillion over the next 10 years. The Committee is to report its recommendations by November 23. If a majority of the Committee approves the report by December 2, the recommendations are sent to the President, the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House and the Senate must vote on the Committee’s recommendations by December 23.

When the debt ceiling next needs to be raised, an increase of between \$1.2 and \$1.5 trillion is allowed if either (1) Congress has passed a balanced budget amendment to the constitution or (2) Congress has approved deficit reduction of at least \$1.5 trillion, presumably based on the Super Committee recommendations. If Congress has approved deficit reduction of between \$1.2 trillion and \$1.5 trillion, the debt ceiling can be increased by the amount of deficit reduction that has been approved.

If Congress has not approved a deficit reduction plan of at least \$1.2 trillion by January 15, 2012, the debt ceiling can be increased when necessary by \$1.2 trillion but automatic across-the-board cuts (called “sequestration”) will be required beginning in January of 2013.

The required cuts will take place from January, 2013 through September, 2021 and must reduce the deficit by \$1 trillion over those nine years. The required cuts will come 50% from defense spending and 50% from nondefense spending. Programs exempt from these cuts include Social Security, Medicaid, and virtually all low-income mandatory spending programs such as TANF, SNAP and the Earned Income Tax Credit. Medicare benefits are exempt from cuts. Cuts to Medicare provider payments are limited to 2%. In 2013, the mandatory cuts would total \$109 billion.

Members of Super Committee

- Rep. Jeb Hensarling (Rep, Texas) Committee co-chair
- Sen. Patty Murray (Dem, Washington) Committee co-chair
- Sen. Jon Kyl (Rep, Arizona)
- Sen. John Kerry (Dem, Massachusetts)
- Sen. Pat Toomey (Rep, Pennsylvania)
- Sen. Max Baucus (Dem, Montana)
- Sen. Rob Portman (Rep, Ohio)
- Rep. Xavier Becerra (Dem, California)
- Rep. Dave Camp (Rep, Michigan)
- Rep. James Clyburn (Dem, South Carolina)
- Rep. Chris Van Hollen (Dem, Maryland)
- Rep. Fred Upton (Rep, Michigan)

Rising Rates of Poverty in America

In Connecticut, 9.1% of all people were without health insurance at the time of the survey. This was not significantly different from the 2009 rate. An estimated 3.0% of children under 18 were uninsured at the time of the 2010 survey, a significant decrease from the 3.8% rate in 2009.

The U.S. Census Bureau released their newest data on poverty in the United States last month. Data show the poverty rate in 2010 reached its second highest point—15.1%—since 1965. The number of people living in deep poverty -- incomes that fall below half of the federal poverty line of \$22,350 for a family of four -- also hit the highest level on record.

Along with the data reporting this surge in poverty, the report also concluded that a record number of Americans lack health insurance and there has been a decline in employer-provided healthcare. This data may help in facilitating the process of implementing health care reform in the Affordable Care Act (effective 2014).

Although the recession officially ended in January 2010, the poverty rate has not fallen. According to

the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “In each of the previous three recessions, the poverty rate did not begin to fall until at least a year after the unemployment rate began to drop.”

Connecticut’s unemployment rate as of June 2011 was 9.1 percent, parallel to the national average, but that percentage does not include all the individuals that are characterized as “discouraged workers” and who have fallen off the radar of even being counted in terms of accurate statistics.

The new Census figures on poverty also show that many more people would have fallen into poverty had it not been for the use of many government assistance programs, such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit), and Medicaid. These figures demonstrate the need for continued support and funding of these vital programs, as well as other programs that help to assist low-income individuals and families.

By Shanice Smith, University of Connecticut, Urban Semester Intern

Update on Low-Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Following the Sept. 27 public hearing on LIHEAP funding, the Appropriations, Energy and Technology and Human Services Committees and the General Assembly rejected the Malloy administration's plan to cut thousands of low-income families who rely on electric or natural gas heat in the winter from the heating program. The Malloy administration had argued that since it is illegal to shut off utilities from November 1 to May 1 due to lack of payment, heating assistance was not as important for these customers. This protection, however, is not in place for those who need oil deliveries. The approved plan will extend to all who qualify, although heating payments will be sharply curtailed due to proposed federal cutbacks to LIHEAP.



Do you have a contribution for our newsletter? Great!
 Email Ellen Small Billard
 (ESmall@larcc.org) or call 860-278-5688 x208

Don't forget, follow us on Facebook and receive action alerts, notifications of upcoming events and policy-related news. If you would like to donate to CABHN online, please visit www.larcc.org

Upcoming CABHN/FESN Meeting

**The next meeting
 will be
 November 18, 2011**

**Location:
 AARP
 21 Oak Street
 Hartford**

**Guest speaker:
 DSS Commissioner Rod
 Bremby**

9:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M

The Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs (CABHN) is a statewide network of individuals, community groups and organizations which supports and promotes advocacy on low-income issues. For more information, please call (860) 278-5688.

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**Legal Assistance Resource Center of CT and
 CABHN (Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs)**
 44 Capitol Ave., Suite 301
 Hartford, CT 06106

We need your feedback on CABHN Fever!

We are interested in making CABHN Fever as helpful as possible to our readers. You can help us achieve that by letting us know what you are most interested in and how we can best meet your needs. Please take a moment to fill out this questionnaire and send, fax or e-mail your responses to us. THANKS!

What issues are you interested in?

- Health Care Welfare
 Employment Housing
 Energy Elder
 Other (please specify)

What kinds of articles are of most interest to you? (Rate 1-5 with 1 as most interesting.)

_____ Descriptions of programs that help people

_____ Descriptions of legislative proposals

_____ Summaries of recent studies relating to issues of concern to low-income residents

_____ Reminders about upcoming events

_____ Suggestions about legislative action that I can participate in

How well do you find CABHN Fever addresses issues that are important to you?

(1) Consistently (2) Most of the time (3) Sometimes (4) Not often

Comments?

Are there issues that you think should receive more attention in CABHN Fever? (please specify)

What do you find most helpful to in the CABHN newsletter?

How do you use CABHN Fever? (check all that apply)

_____ To gain knowledge/information

_____ To follow issues that are relevant to my life

_____ To follow issues that are relevant to my clients/constituents

_____ To keep up with what's going on at the Legislature

_____ For action updates and suggestions

Other?

Are you interested in having someone visit your agency to speak with clients about the issues and opportunities that are addressed in CABHN Fever? Please let us know which issues you are interested in and be sure to leave us your contact information!

Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve CABHN Fever?

Are you:

- an advocate
- a social service provider
- a policy-maker
- a teacher
- a government worker
- a resident who uses programs for low-income people

OPTIONAL: How can we contact you?

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Thank you for your input, we appreciate your response!

Mail to: CABHN
44 Capitol Ave., Suite 301
Hartford, CT 06106

Fax to: (860) 278-2957 **Email:** ESmall@larcc.org

Additional Opportunities through CABHN

CABHN electronic Action Alerts:

You may request to receive CABHN Fever electronically. Please email esmall@larcc.org if you are interested.

In addition, CABHN sends out frequent action alerts and additional opportunities to members. If you would like to receive these electronically, please let us know.

CABHN Meetings:

CABHN convenes monthly informational meetings jointly with the Family Economic Success Network. These meetings highlight issues relating to public benefits, grassroots movements, and policy issues affecting lower-income residents. We host guest speakers including state agency commissioners, administrators, and legislators. If you are interested in receiving updates about these meetings, please email us to sign up at esmall@larcc.org. All are welcome to attend. We hope to see you soon!