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CABHN FEVER



\$20,782,500 in Federal Stimulus Checks Unclaimed in Connecticut!

69,275 Connecticut residents have not claimed their money. There's still time, so help spread the word!

The Center on Budget & Policy Priorities (CBPP) reports that there are low-income seniors, disabled veterans and others with disabilities who are at risk of losing out on their federal economic stimulus payments.

The payments are worth at least \$300 per person/\$600 for a married couple and more for filers raising children or grandchildren under 17.

Eligible individuals have until October 15th to file for payments.

To be eligible for the economic stimulus payment, you **MUST** file a 2007 federal tax return (Form 1040A) for 2007 – even if you don't normally file a tax return!

Q&A On Stimulus Checks:

Q. I have too little income – or nontaxable benefits – to be required to file an income tax return and haven't done so since retiring. Should I still file?

A. YES! A return **MUST** be filed to receive payment. If you have an income from work, earnings from Social Security benefits, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Veterans' disability benefits or Railroad Retirement benefits – or ANY combination of pay for work and/or earnings from any of these benefits worth a total of at least \$3,000 in 2007 - you **MUST FILE** to receive your check.

Q. Will receiving the stimulus check endanger my Medicaid benefits?

A. NO! Receiving the stimulus payment will not endanger eligibility for retirement, disability or other public benefits like Medicaid, SSI and Food Stamps.

Q. What else do I need to know?

A. You must have a valid Social Security number (spouse too if filing a joint return).

You cannot be claimed as a dependent on another's tax return.

For more information and to download outreach materials, visit the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities <http://www.cbpp.org/pubs/stimulus.htm>. Material is available in several different languages.

Help To Keep Hartford Libraries Open



Community groups are working to keep the Mark Twain and Blue Hills Hartford Public Library branches open despite city budget difficulties. On August 11, the City Council approved a budget of \$200,000 for the libraries but Mayor Eddie Perez has delayed release of the funds. The Board of the Public Library is discussing a plan to re-open the branches that was developed by the Mayor and the City Council.

That plan would make keeping the branches open during the after school hours of 2:00 to 6:00 pm a priority. The branches would be closed during the weekend.

The North Hartford Coalition, made up of the North Hartford Strategic Network, Blue Hills Civic Association, A Better Way Foundation, North Hartford Youth Athletic Club, the Clean Slate Committee and Working Families, is working on this issue. For more information or to get involved, please call 860-570-0782.

If you'd like to receive CABHN Fever by email or would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact esmall@larcc.org or call 860-278-5688.

"Days of Caring"

The United Way of Greater New Haven invites you to participate in the United Way Days of Caring 2008 Healthy Baby Diaper Drive September 15-21, to benefit families in need through the United Way's partnership with The Diaper Bank. For more information on how to hold a diaper drive log onto uwgnh.org or call Amy Townsley at 203-691-4223.

The Diaper Bank Needs You! Volunteers are needed to help collect, deliver and count the diapers collected during the Days of Caring Healthy Baby Diaper Drive. Please contact Program Manager Kym Hunter at The Diaper Bank at 203-934-7009 for more information.

Save the date to celebrate! On Thursday, October 16th, The Diaper Bank is celebrating 2 million diapers provided to families in need in New Haven, Hartford, and Bridgeport at the Eli Whitney Museum in Hamden from 5:30-7:30. For more information, please call Janet Stolfi Alfano at 203-934-7009.

Resource: Foreclosure Its Impact on Renters

To raise public awareness about the foreclosure crisis's impact on renters, The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) has compiled an up-to-date list of NLIHC resources, press articles, publications, and videos on renters in foreclosure. Each resource includes a full citation and a short summary of its key findings. NLIHC is committed to updating the list through 2008. Please contact Danilo Pelletiere (danilo@nlihc.org) if you would like to suggest additional resources.

The website can be accessed at www.nlihc.org/template/page.cfm?id=159.



Election 2008 - Get Out The Vote And Make All Voices Heard!

The next election will set the country's course on health care, jobs, housing and other key issues. Everyone's vote counts!

Mark your calendar for:

**Monday, September 29, 2008 – Friday, October 3, 2008,
Connecticut's National Homeless & Low Income
Voter Registration Week**

Join the CT Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) – CT, and the Reaching Home Campaign in participating in this national event. The Voter Registration Week is part of the efforts of the National Coalition for the Homeless, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, and the National Low Income Housing Coalition

How can your organization get involved?

Host a voter registration drive and promote voter education and participation. To participate, you can hold a voter registration event anytime during the week of September 29, and then make a plan to encourage all who registered to get out and vote in November!

Contact Kate Kelly, Reaching Home Campaign Manager, at 860-244-0066 or kate@ctpartnershiphousing.com to let her know when you are planning your event

Completed voter registration forms will be collected on Monday, October 6, 2008.

What is the goal?

To register hundreds of homeless and low income individuals across the state to vote.

What resources are available?

Go to www.ctreachinghome.org for voter registration forms, materials and more!

Contact the Secretary of State's Office of Legislation and Elections Administration Division at 1-800-540-3764 with any question or to invite an election officer to attend your event

Can individuals who are homeless register to vote?

Yes. They must identify the specific location considered to be home, the place where the individual returns regularly and has a present intention to remain.

Can convicted felons who have been incarcerated vote?

Yes. Individuals, except those released on parole or convicted of election law violations, can restore their voting rights by completing a voter registration application and mailing it to the local Registrars of Voters or by appearing in person in the Registrars of Voters' town hall office. Individuals convicted of a felony and sentenced to probation no longer lose their voting rights. For more information contact the CT Secretary of State's Office at 1-800-540-3764

For more information contact: Kate Kelly, Reaching Home Campaign Manager, 860-244-0066, kate@ctpartnershiphousing.com.

Submitted by Kate Kelly, Reaching Home Campaign Manager.

Clean Slate Committee Community Update

Lack of opportunity is one of the many root causes of the seemingly endless cycle of violence plaguing Hartford and other urban areas. The Clean Slate Committee (CSC) is working to combat the stigma that impedes formerly incarcerated individuals from successfully reintegrating into society.

CSC is proposing an ordinance called Think Outside the Box (TOB). It is designed to address employment discrimination against formerly incarcerated individuals. TOB, known nationally as Ban the Box (BTB), has been enacted in six states (New York, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Hawaii) and the cities of San Francisco, Indianapolis and Boston. Ban The Box calls for the removal of the criminal conviction question from job applications. After a job applicant is interviewed and demonstrates that he or she is qualified for the position, a conditional job offer is made. A security background check is then conducted by the employer, who cannot disqualify the applicant if the nature of their criminal conviction is not relevant to the job. Ban The Box has proven to be highly successful since its inception.

Safeguards are built into each version of BTB, ensuring that public safety is taken into account. BTB does not apply to fields such as law enforcement or teaching, which require security background checks by state law. The Clean Slate Committee recently met with Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez to discuss Think Outside the Box. During the meeting, Mayor Perez expressed his dedication to addressing the issue of violence in Hartford. He has agreed to learn more about BTB ordinances in other states. TOB is currently gaining momentum at City Hall, where CSC is working with City Council members to create a draft of the ordinance. Look out for future updates on the progress of TOB in Hartford and throughout

(See CSC Update p.4)

CT Voices Releases 2008 State of Working Connecticut Report on Wage Trends

Good news: Real (inflation-adjusted) wages rose for many Connecticut workers between 2006 and 2007.

Bad news: Real wages are still below what they were before the economic slump of the early 2000's.

Connecticut Voices for Children issued its 8th annual State of Working Connecticut on August 31. The study analyzes wage trends over time and by income level, gender and race/ethnicity.

Other key findings in the study:

- The gap between high and low wages is wide and growing. Very-high wages are 4.8 times very-low wages in Connecticut. In 1989, very-high wages were 3.6 times very-low wages.
- The gap between men's and women's wages narrowed in 2007. The median wage for women was 82% that of men. In 2006, the median wage for women was 76% that of men. This narrowing of the gap resulted from both an increase in

median wages for women and a decrease for men.

- Real median wages for African American workers in Connecticut increased by 8% - from \$13,36 in 2006 to \$14.44 in 2007.
- Racial/ethnic wage disparities are wider in Connecticut than in the United States as a whole. African American workers earn 72% of what white workers earn and Hispanic workers earn just 61% of what white workers earn.
- Private sector benefits for workers are eroding and union membership is declining. Employer-provided health insurance has declined from 65% of the private workforce (in 1998-2000) to 60% now and private sector employer-provided pensions have declined from 65% to 60%.

The full study is available on the CT Voices website - www.ctkidslink.org.



President Signs New Housing Bill

On July 30 President Bush signed the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, whose most important advocate has been Sen. Chris Dodd of Connecticut. The act provides millions of dollars in foreclosure assistance through a program called "HOPE," increases funding for housing counseling, provides money to towns and states to purchase foreclosed properties, expands authorization for the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, and creates a new trust fund dedicated to the production of rental housing. More specifically:

HOPE: A new "HOPE for Homeowners" program will provide \$300 billion nationwide in federal mortgage insur-

ance to help homeowners refinance subprime mortgages. The state expects to be able to help about 3,700 Connecticut homeowners. The federal insurance will probably be used in conjunction with the new Connecticut HERO program. The lender must be willing to write down the mortgage debt to an amount that the homeowner can afford that is less than 90% of the value of the home. Lenders, however, do not have to participate in the program.

Housing counseling: Connecticut expects to receive about \$1 million for additional housing counselors to help homeowners negotiate with their lenders.

Neighborhood stabilization: The act appropriates almost \$4 billion for states and towns to purchase and recycle fore-

closed properties. Connecticut expects about \$66 million. At least 25% of the funds must be used to buy, at a discount from appraised value, abandoned or foreclosed homes or apartment buildings to be used for households with incomes below 50% of area median.

Low-income tax credits: The federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program is increased by 10%. Connecticut expects to receive \$700,000 in tax credits, which will leverage about \$12 million in affordable rental housing.

Housing Trust Fund: This is the first new federal housing production program since 1990 and the first to be targeted to extremely low-income households since Section 8 was created in 1974. At least 90% of the money in the Fund must be used for rental housing, and at least 75% must be for extremely low-income households (below 30% of area median income). It will be funded through profits from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the two major federal housing finance entities, and will not be dependent on annual appropriations from Congress. It will begin operating in 2010.

New PCCM Option for HUSKY A

Starting January 1, 2009, DSS will be offering Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) as a new way for HUSKY A clients to receive their health care. Over the next few months, DSS will be notifying families in HUSKY A (some have already received a general notification) that they will need to choose between Aetna Better Health, Americhoice, Connecticut Health Network (CHN) or PCCM as the system for delivering their health care services.

PCCM is an alternative to the managed care insurance companies and allows clients to choose their own doctor, who will then be directly responsible for managing and providing all aspects of their care, without the intervention of an insurance company. However, PCCM will not be available unless doctors sign-up to become PCCM providers!

(See PCCM p.4)

4th Annual Walk for Thought

*Sponsored by the Brain Injury
Association of Connecticut &
United Steel*

Saturday, October 4th

11:00am check-in, walk begins at
12:30 pm - rain or shine!

Great River Park, East River Dr.
East Hartford, CT

Pre-register by September 12 and receive
a Walk for Thought t-shirt. The walk
course is one mile and fully wheelchair
accessible. If you can't make it the day
of the walk, be a virtual walker.

For more information, call
860-721-8111 or go to
www.biact.org for more information and
online registration.

Clean Slate (Cont. from p.2)

Connecticut. For more information on
TOB and the location of a CSC chapter
near you, contact David Samuels at
(860) 570-0782 or samuelssloflo@
aol.com. Learn more about CSC by
visiting A Better Way Foundation's
website: www.abwf-ct.org.
*Submitted by the Clean Slate
Committee.*

PCCM (Cont. from p.3)

HUSKY A clients interested in PCCM
should ask their doctor to sign up as
a PCCM provider as soon as they are
able to, starting in September. For more
information contact Sheldon Toubman
at New Haven Legal Assistance at 203-
946-4811x148.

CABHN Meetings

Upcoming Meeting

**CABHN/FESN Meeting
Friday, Oct. 3**

9:30-11:30 A.M.

Place

**To Be Announced
Planning for the 2009
Legislative Session.**

*The Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human
Needs (CABHN) is a statewide network of
individuals, community groups and organiza-
tions 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



Conference Registration Form

Prospering Communities, Thriving Families

September 22 & 23, 2008
Rocky Hill Marriott

General Information: (Please type or print legibly)

Name: _____ Title: _____
Organization: _____
Organization Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____

Workshop Tracks:

- Get Connecticut Working
Developing Leaders in a Time of Challenge
The Changing Face of Poverty and Using Data to Deliver the Message
Promising Community Initiatives

Workshop Descriptions to be available at www.cafca.org by August 15th

Fees and Payment:

Conference Fee..... \$175.00
(Includes 3 workshop sessions, breakfasts and lunches and reception)

Instructions: Registration forms can be submitted on-line at
www.cafca.org, via fax at 860-832-9493 or via postal mail
at the address below

- 1. Please use One Form per person. Photocopy the form for additional registrants.
2. Registration Fees must be received prior to the conference in order for registration to be completed. Mail registration and fee to: CAFCA 144 Clinton St. New Britain, CT 06053 Attention: Rhonda

Visit www.cafca.org or email rhonda@cafca.org for more information



Generous Support Provided By:

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

**Save
The Date!**

November 6, 2008

The Raymond Settlement:
*Impacting the Rights of
Department of Social Services
Clients with Disabilities*

When: *Thursday, November 6, 2008
10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Includes Continental Breakfast*

Where: *Legislative Office Building – Room 2C
Hartford*

You're invited to attend a free half-day conference on the landmark Connecticut federal court settlement in *Raymond v. Rowland*, which has changed the policies and procedures the Department of Social Services uses to help individuals with disabilities qualify for DSS programs.

Speakers from the Department of Social Services, the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights, the plaintiffs' litigation team, and national advocacy organizations will highlight the terms of the Raymond settlement and its practical effects on benefit applicants and recipients with disabling conditions.

Sponsored by Greater Hartford Legal Aid, Inc., Connecticut Legal Services, Inc., New Haven Legal Assistance Association, Inc., Legal Assistance Resource Center of CT, and the Connecticut Department of Social Services.

To Register: Contact Maureen Brown at Legal Assistance Resource
Center of CT
mbrown@larcc.org or 860-278-5688 x205.