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CABHN FEVER

Elderly and Disabled May Get Rebate Check

You may be able to get a rebate check from the State through the “*Renter’s Rebate Program*”. The amount of your rebate depends on your income and the amount of rent and utility bills. The rebate check can be from **\$50 to \$900**. There is NO application fee and there are NO asset limits.

You may be able to get this rebate if you...

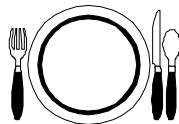
- Are 65 years or older; **or**
- Are 50 years or older and are the surviving spouse of someone who was eligible at the time of his/her death; **or**
- Are permanently and totally disabled and 18 years of age or older;

AND, you must ...

- Have lived in Connecticut for one year or more; **and**
- Rent an Apartment, a room , a mobile home, or live in cooperative housing; **and**
- have an income below \$26,100/year if you are single or a combined income below \$31,900/year if you are married.

How to apply:

Apply between **May 15** and **September 15** at your town’s Social Services Department or Tax Assessor’s Office. Rebates can be for up to \$900 for married couple and \$700 for single people. For more information, call Infoline at 2-1-1 or call your TownHall.❖



Free Summer Lunch for Kids

The Summer Food Program offers free lunches during the summer to kids ages 18 and under (or up to 21 if the person has a disability). There are no income or asset limits, and there are no town residency requirements either.

Pre-registration is not necessary. Even toddlers can go if their caregivers are there to cut the food up for them! Some sites offer breakfast AND lunch, and many are located at recreation centers and schools so the kids also have a chance to play or be involved in a program at the same time.

Most sites start serving meals in early July. To find a site near you, call Infoline by dialing 2-1-1. Infoline is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.❖

Hunger Awareness Day 2003

On **June 5th** people across the country will gather to focus the nation’s attention on the severe but solvable problem of domestic hunger and its impact on our nation’s children. June 5th is National Hunger Awareness Day 2003 and over half of America’s Second Harvest food banks have big plans for everything from community meals to food sort-a-thons.

Childhood hunger is an unseen epidemic in our nation. And it grows even more acute during the summer, when millions of children don’t have access to the school lunches they normally depend upon.

We hope that the 9 million children who face hunger in America can inspire this nation to make ending hunger a priority. If we all raise our voices on the same day America will listen. **But we need everyone’s help.** So, please get your organization, company, family and friends involved.❖

Husky A Lawsuit

Health care coverage for parents and children who were scheduled to lose benefits on April 1 has been extended until at least July 1. The extension is the result of a lawsuit filed in late March. Further developments in the suit are expected soon.❖

“Once Upon A Time...Welfare Made A Difference”

At the CABHN Meeting on June 6th, we will be showing the video “Once Upon a Time...Welfare Made a Difference”.

This captivating 28 minute video features four women from across the United States who share their dramatic stories of how welfare served as a lifeline for their families. The film includes an introduction by Representative Lynn Woolsey (D-6th Dist. CA), a former welfare recipient and current chair of the Democratic Caucus Task Force on Children. This video has been screened in New York City, Boston, and, most recently, in Washington DC for members of Congress and their staff.

The meeting begins at 9:30 am at the CRT Building, 555 Windsor St., Hartford in the 3rd floor conference room. Please call Deborah Noble if you would like more information at 860-278-5688 x 12 or you may email her at DNoble@LARCC.org

New Social Security Website

This new and improved website now has information available on subjects ranging from how to get a Social Security number to how to go back to work while receiving disability benefits. File for retirement, disability and spouse’s benefits; check the status of your application; request a replacement Medicare card; and so much more! Check out www.socialsecurity.gov❖

Medicaid Cards Now Available!

If you are on SAGA or Medicaid, **you can get your prescription filled** even if you can't pay the \$1.00 co-pay.

A new law calls for a \$1.00 co-pay for prescriptions for some people on Medicaid or SAGA. BUT, if you can't afford the \$1.00 co-pay, just tell the pharmacist. Under the law, the pharmacist **MUST** give you the prescription even if you can't pay the \$1.00.



The pharmacist must accept your word that you can't afford the co-pay- no questions may be asked!

The pharmacist also must fill your prescription even if you owe for a past co-pay or many past co-pays— you are not required to make payment on a past co-pay debt to get your medicine.

- ✓ Show the pharmacist the attached card which will explain your rights.
- ✓ Keep the card with you for the next time.
- ✓ If you have any questions or problems call: Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320

(Front of Card)

I am a recipient of Medicaid or State Administered General Assistance Medical Assistance.

I AM UNABLE TO PAY THE \$1.00 CO-PAY TODAY.

My declaration that I am unable to pay is sufficient to establish my inability to pay the co-payment according to federal and state law and Policy Transmittal 2003-06 of the Conn. Department of Social Services (March 2003). *Please see other side*

(Back of Card)

Refusing to fill a prescription or to provide health services is a VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW.

Refusal to fill or dispense a prescription (or any portion of it) and refusal to provide any health services to a recipient because the individual is unable to pay a **current or past** co-payment, or is unable to enter into or keep a payment arrangement, is a violation of Federal Law: 42 C.F.R. §447.15; DSS Policy Transmittal 2003-06.

Questions?
 Statewide Legal Services (800) 453-3320
 Attorney General-Health Fraud Unit (860)808-5355
 Dept. of Social Services Pharmacy Unit (860)424-5150

Help Wanted!

Block Watch/Community Organizer

Qualifications:

Ability to communicate clearly and easily with people from diverse backgrounds; willingness to work some nights and weekends; self directed; energetic; not afraid of confrontation; access to car; Hartford residency a must and bilingual preferred; passion for community organization and activism.

Duties:

Interact, recruit, organize, train, assist, motivate neighborhood residents/ community leaders into activities and meetings that will empower them and build community power that will then bring about needed change.

Salary:

Mid \$20's. Benefits include health insurance; paid vacation, travel stipend and organizing training.

To Apply:

Send resume and cover letter to Hartford Areas Rally Together (HART), 423 Washington Street, Hartford, CT 06106 Attention: Ex. Director or fax to (860)525-7759

HART is a community organization whose goal is to empower Hartford neighborhood people to improve their quality of life. HART is an Equal Opportunity Employer.❖

Did You Know?

On May 16, 1939 the first Food Stamp Program was started in the United States and had a peak enrollment of 4 million people. The program ended in 1943 with World War II and started again as a pilot project in 1961. The program was made permanent with the Food Stamp Act of 1964. (Cybercast News Service 2003)❖

CTNOW Events

June 8 from 12:30-4:00pm, First Annual Freedom Garden party.

September 19, 2003 5:30p.m. - 6:30 with reception to follow, First Annual Famous Dead Woman's Tour at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Hartford. For details on either event, call Beverley at 860-524-5978 or email ct_now@yahoo.com.



Governor Vetoes Budget

On May 16, Governor Rowland vetoed HB 6720, An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2005. HB 6720 was the budget and revenue plan passed by CT's General Assembly on May 14 and closely mirrored the proposals passed by the Appropriations and Finance Committees in April. Although the veto was anticipated, it was a disappointment to advocates as the General Assembly's proposed plan included restorations of many of the social services programs that had been cut drastically or eliminated in the Governor's initial budget proposal.

Listed below are some items that were included in the vetoed budget:

- SAGA cash and medical funded
- Safety Net Program funded
- Extensions to TFA stay at two starting July 1st - consistent with the Governor's budget and the provision passed in the February deficit reduction package
- HUSKY: presumptive eligibility retained; HUSKY B remains open; adult dental program retained; premiums and co-pays (recommended by the Governor) adopted
- HUSKY A for parents with incomes between 100%-150% of federal poverty level not restored
- All programs for legal immigrants remain open to new applicants after June 30.
- Some funding for the Child Care Certificate Program restored; the program will open for about 1,000 new families.
- \$950,000 provided to enhance Housing/Homeless services (\$300,00 to support Homes for the Brave).
- Children's Health Council funded.

Additionally, HB 6720, included the following revenue enhancements:

- Increase the personal income tax rate of 5% to 5.5% on taxable income over \$500K (joint), to 5.75% on taxable income over \$1M (joint) and to 5.9% on taxable income over \$2M (joint) [with proportional adjustments for other filing categories].
- Reduce maximum property tax credit from \$500 to \$460
- Increase the sales tax rate from 6.0% to 6.5%



Call your state Representatives and Senators now and let them know that they need to support a budget that restores cuts to social services programs, includes funding for HUSKY A parents and brings back laid-off state employees. ♦

Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization

Congress has been working on reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act this session. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA), passed in 1998, restructured the federally funded system for job training and other employment-related services for dislocated workers and youth. The stated purposes of WIA include increasing the skills and earnings of participants, improving the quality of the workforce and reducing welfare dependency.

The House recently passed its version of WIA reauthorization, HR 1261. The Workforce Alliance, a national coalition advocating for federal policies that invest in the skills of workers, has expressed concern that HR 1261 consolidates and block-

(See WIA pg. 4)

Proposed Federal Legislation Threatens Section 8 Program

Two bills have been introduced in Congress which threaten the existence of Section 8. The bills would implement proposals contained in the Bush Administration budget to convert Section 8 into state block grants. The budget would also provide less funding than is needed to support all of the vouchers likely to be in use next year.

Housing advocates across the country are urging Congress to reject the proposals.

Currently, Section 8 vouchers in Connecticut go directly to the Department of Social Services and local housing authorities to distribute. Rules for implementing the voucher program are set federally and are uniform countrywide. Under Senate bill S. 947 and House bill H.R. 1841, each state would get one lump sum for housing vouchers. States would be free to make up their own rules for the vouchers, with fiscal concerns likely to result in vouchers being reduced in value, targeted to higher-incomes and limited in duration. Protections for voucher holders would probably be lost. Some results would be:

Fewer vouchers would be available over time, as funding levels fall further and further behind housing costs.

Fewer vouchers would go to the lowest income households, since those vouchers are most costly to the state.

Tenants' shares of the rent may go up, since the state could decide to permit unlimited side payments or increase the percentage of rent paid by the tenant.

Housing choice would decline, since states would be tempted not to make voucher payments high enough to permit use in non-center city neighborhoods.

Section 8 could be turned into a short-term quasi-welfare program. Housing assistance is not welfare. Low-income working families cannot afford decent housing without a voucher; and even

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WIA (continued from p.3)

grants several worker training funds. Block-granting could result in states ignoring the important needs of different types of jobseekers and could pit the needs of low-income adults against the needs of unemployed workers. In addition, the Alliance is concerned that the bill does not go far enough in providing workers with adequate access to needed training.

It is unclear when or whether the Senate will take up this issue. As with TANF reauthorization (see attached article), action on this issue may be delayed by lengthy debates on other priority issues. If the Senate does work on WIA, it could improve the bill by expanding federal funding for skills development, expanding access to training for all workers served by the WIA system and creating new opportunities for business engagement in the WIA system.

For more information on this issue, go to The Workforce Alliance web site: <http://www.workforcealliance.org> ❖

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middle-class home owners receive federal housing subsidies through the mortgage interest deduction. Block granting Section 8 will invite states to impose the same types of restrictions on housing vouchers as are being imposed on the receipt of welfare benefits (e.g., lifetime time limits).

What can you do?

You can make three short telephone calls immediately. Contact both of your U.S. Senators and your member of Congress at **202-224-3121** and tell them to say “NO” to the housing block grant bills, S. 947 and H.R. 1841, and “YES” to adequate voucher funding.

U.S. Senate:

Sen. Christopher Dodd
Sen. Joseph Lieberman

U.S. Congress:

Rep. John Larson (Greater Hartford)
Rep. Robert Simmons (Eastern CT)
Rep. Rosa DeLauro (Greater New Haven)
Rep. Christopher Shay (Fairfield County)
Rep. Nancy Johnson (New Britain ,
Meriden, Waterbury, Danbury, and
Northwestern CT) ❖

**Legal Assistance Resource Center of CT and
CABHN** (Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs)
80 Jefferson Street
Hartford, CT 06106

**CABHN Meetings
held 1st Friday of the month**

9:30AM - 11:30PM

June 6th

Community Renewal Team (CRT)
555 Windsor St., Hartford

Topics:

Video

"Once Upon A Time...Welfare Made
a Difference"

See Article, Pg. 1

**July meeting date to
be determined on June
6th.**

*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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