

The United States established diplomatic relations with Lithuania on July 28, 1992. U.S. representation accredited to Lithuania served from the legation in Riga, Latvia, until May 31, 1930, when a legation in Kaunas was established. The Soviet invasion forced the closure of Legation uninterrupted for over 50 years. The U.S. never recognized the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the U.S.S.R., and views the present Government of Lithuania as a legal continuation of the interwar republic. Lithuania has enjoyed Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) treatment with the U.S. since December, 1991. Through 1996, the U.S. has committed over \$100 million to Lithuania's economic and political transformation and to address humanitarian needs. In 1994, the U.S. and Lithuania signed an agreement of bilateral trade and intellectual property protection, and in 1997 a bilateral investment treaty.

For over fifty years, there was a bipartisan consensus on maintaining a strong policy of non-recognition of the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the former Soviet Union.

Since Lithuania regained their independence on March 11, 1990, the United States has played a critical role in helping these states implement democratic and free market reforms strengthening their security and sovereignty.

The 1998 U.S. and Lithuania signed The Baltic Charter Partnership which recalls the history, and underscores that the United States has a "real, profound, and enduring" interest in the security and independence of the three Baltic states. This is because, as the Charter also notes, our interest in a Europe whole and free will not be ensured until Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are secure.

Mr. President, I commend the people of Lithuania for their courage and perseverance in using peaceful means to regain their independence. I join with the people of Lithuania as they celebrate their independence day. ●

#### RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE—CUT BACK ON HUNGER

● Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, the nation's economy is the best it's been in decades. Under the leadership of President Clinton, business productivity has reached historic highs. Enterprise and entrepreneurship are flourishing, generating an extraordinary expansion, with remarkable efficiencies and job creation. Inflation and unemployment are at record lows.

In the midst of this extraordinary prosperity, however, millions of Americans go to bed hungry each night. A report yesterday by Second Harvest, the network of food banks, documents that 26 million Americans received food and grocery products through Second Harvest in 1997.

The report contains conclusions that should shock the conscience of us all. Children and the elderly are over-rep-

resented at emergency food outlets. Over a third of the beneficiaries are children, and 16% are senior citizens age 65 and older. Women make up 62% of those served at soup kitchens and food pantries. 47% are white, 32% are African-American, 15% are Latino and 3% are Native American.

Even more disturbing, the report finds that 39% of all emergency client households have at least one member who is working. Nearly half the employees in those households are working full-time. It is shocking that in America today, so many households with full-time workers are forced to rely on emergency food aid. 86% of households receiving emergency food aid earn less than \$15,500 a year. 67% earn less than \$10,000 a year. Kim, a single mother who works as a nurse, said "I never thought I'd be in this situation. People think of the single mother and immediately stereotype her. Requiring emergency food assistance in today's blossoming environment is one thing that the public doesn't understand."

The reason why so many Americans need emergency food aid is obvious—the current prosperity has passed them by. Their earnings are too low. Wanda, an emergency food client and mother of two, put it this way: "My husband works, but at the end of the month we just run out of money. I wouldn't know what to do if it weren't for the food pantry."

Raising the minimum wage is an important step toward solving this problem. Today, full-time minimum wage workers earn \$10,712 a year—\$2,600 below the poverty level for a family of three. According to the Department of Labor, 60% of minimum wage earners are women; nearly three-fourths are adults; over half work full time. Their families need the money, and they deserve an increase in the minimum wage. If we believe in rewarding work, we have to be willing to pay working families more than a sub-poverty minimum wage.

The American people understand that you can't raise a family on \$5.15 an hour. The 26 million Americans receiving food aid last year understand this fact of life all too well. We must raise the minimum wage, and raise it now. No one who works for a living should have to live in poverty.

I ask that the first chapter of the Second Harvest report "Hunger 1997: The Faces and Facts," be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows:

#### THE FACES & FACTS OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE HUNGRY

A *kaleidoscope* of faces that makeup the hungry in America can be found behind the charts and graphs of this report. Young and old. *Employed* and looking for work. Living in suburbs, cities and rural areas. Many of them never anticipated that they would ever need this type of support. The *reasons and circumstances* are varied. The hidden face of hunger in America is often missed. To reveal the faces behind the facts, interviews were conducted at food pantries, food shelves,

soup kitchens, and emergency shelters—nearly 28,000 clients in all have provided their personal stories to this research study. They have made an invaluable contribution to this research effort.

Their plight is the reason for this study. "Hunger 1997: The Faces & Facts" describes the *health and social consequences* of hunger. Second Harvest can use the understanding of their situation to be able to serve them more efficiently and effectively.

This first part profiles the recipients of emergency food. According to "Hunger 1997: The Faces & Facts," 26 million people in 1997 received food and grocery products through the Second Harvest network of food banks.

#### EDUCATION

According to labor statistics, educational attainment is perhaps the greatest indicator of job and income mobility. Thirty six percent have a high school diploma or equivalent. Forty percent have not completed high school. Only five percent of all emergency clients have attended college or received a college degree.

#### GEOGRAPHY

US Census Bureau statistics show that 90 percent of all low-income people live outside urban ghettos. Census figures indicate that the low-income population of suburbs is growing at a faster rate than that of central cities or rural areas. Agency service areas reflect the changing demography of the people they serve with nearly one-third of agencies serving suburban areas.

#### EMPLOYMENT

More than one-third (38.6 percent) of all emergency client households have at least one member who is working. Of those households, 49 percent contain someone who is working full-time, 47.8 percent include someone who is working part-time or has seasonal work. Two percent of all households include someone who is enrolled in JOBS or other government sponsored job-training program. Twelve percent of all emergency client households include someone who is retired. Twenty one percent of all emergency client households include someone who is disabled. Thirty-five percent of all emergency client households include someone who is unemployed.

Eighty six percent of emergency client households earn less than \$15,500 annually. Ninety percent of emergency client households served by the network have incomes at or below 150 percent of poverty.

"Nearly everyone of us is just two paychecks away from financial crisis," says Richard Goebel, executive director of the St. Paul Food Bank and a member of the Second Harvest Board of Directors.

Despite the strong economy and a low unemployment, many emergency food recipients have limited incomes and job security. As someone who has utilized emergency feeding programs, Kim, an employed nurse and single mother, can strongly relate to Goebel's words. "I never thought I'd be in this situation. People think of the single mother and immediately stereotype her. Requiring emergency food assistance in today's blossoming environment is one thing that the public doesn't understand."

\*Note—households may represent more than one family member so numbers total more than 100%.

#### REASONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

For many who have never had to deal with the problem of hunger, it is beyond comprehension the reasons. Why do people depend on emergency food? How Long have people depended on emergency food programs? What about government resources?

#### WHY?

Despite the strong economy, the percentage of people living in poverty has hardly

changed in the past year. The poverty level for a family of three is currently \$13,330 annually. Sixty-seven percent of emergency client households have a yearly income of \$10,000 or less. Wanda, an emergency food client and mother of two, says, "My husband works but at the end of the month we just run out of money. I wouldn't know what to do if it weren't for the food pantry." For millions of American families, low wage jobs or inadequate government assistance are not sufficient to provide a family's basic nutritional needs.

#### HOW LONG HAVE PEOPLE DEPENDED ON EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE?

The study shows that most people seeking assistance are in a temporary hunger crisis and are not long-term dependents. Forty-four percent of Second Harvest clients have received food and grocery products for six months or less; eighteen percent for less than month.

#### WHAT ABOUT GOVERNMENT RESOURCES?

**Food stamps.** Forty-one percent of emergency food clients receive food stamps, 79 percent of those receiving food stamps say that they do not last through the end of the month. Eleven percent of food-stamp clients polled say their benefits have been discontinued, and 20 percent have seen a decrease in benefits. Of the clients not currently receiving food stamps, 40 percent have applied and are awaiting approval for benefits.

Sixty-four percent of client households with children participate in School Breakfast and Lunch programs, 31 percent of emergency clients with children participate in the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Twenty-one percent of emergency clients with children participate in the Child- and Adult-Care Food Programs, and/or Summer Food Program.

Ninety-two percent of Second Harvest families with children receive no government assistance for daycare.

#### HEALTH AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Twenty-eight percent of adults seeking food assistance have missed meals in the last month because there wasn't enough food, and (call out) 9% of clients' children have missed meals in the past month.\*

"It's criminal that we live in a country that will allow a child to go hungry," says Rick Ellenberger, an elementary school teacher in Orlando. "Studies show that if children are not ready to learn by the time they are five or six years old, we've lost them."

The growing body of medical evidence shows that even short periods of under-nutrition can affect a child's behavior, cognitive development, and future productivity. "Children make up about one-third of our population, but they make up 100 percent of our future as a nation," states Dr. Joseph Zanga, President, American Academy of Pediatrics. "What opportunities have we lost because a child was not nourished properly? A scientist who discovers a cure for cancer? A politician or statesman who brings lasting peace to the world?"

#### HEALTH

Twenty-eight percent of emergency clients have had to choose between medical care or filling prescriptions and buying food. Thirty-seven percent have delayed medical care because they couldn't afford it. Thirty-six percent of emergency clients report that members of their household are in poor health, and 41 percent of the clients have unpaid medical or hospital bills. "My husband is so

frail that I must stay home and take care of him and the children," says Martina, whose husband is disabled due to being robbed and shot while leaving his job. Although the family receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and food stamps, it is not enough to support a family of four.

#### HOUSING

Thirty-five percent of people seeking assistance have had to choose between buying food and paying their rent or mortgage. And, 15.8 percent of emergency food clients are homeless, another 5 percent are living in marginal housing, such as living with friends. Stanley, a disabled caretaker whose partner works at a motel, says, "If it wasn't for the food pantry, we would starve at the end of the month. We pay the rent and utilities first and from then on it's a day-to-day existence."

America is the richest country in the world. And, yet tonight thousands of your neighbors will go to bed hungry. It may be your child's schoolmate who is under-nourished and has difficulty learning on an empty stomach. Or, it could be a co-worker, a working mother whose low-wage job doesn't make ends meet. Perhaps it's an elderly neighbor who has to make a decision whether to delay filling a prescription or buying groceries. "The faces of hunger are as broad and diverse as the faces of America," explained David Nasby, Director, Community Affairs, General Mills, Inc., and chair of the Second Harvest Board of Directors. "It may be the neighbor down the street who has encountered a tough situation or the child who is estranged from a parent. It's everybody. People you know and would never think hunger would touch. These personal low points have an impact on every single community."

Despite an economy that is thriving, unemployment is at a 30 year low, and a stock market that continues to reach historic highs, more than 21 million people in this country seek emergency food assistance through Second Harvest network at least part of the year. These startling statistics include eight million children, and more than three-and-a-half million elderly.

"Hunger 1997: The Faces & Facts" does not attempt to simplify a complex social issue. Instead, it is Second Harvest's hope that this research study will establish a clearer picture of hunger in America and its effects on all of us. No single strategy, tactic or program can solve the problem. It takes a combined effort of community involvement, government action, and charitable service to effect a solution.

Second Harvest's research shows the need is urgent. With its network of certified affiliate food banks comprising the largest domestic hunger-relief system in the country, the data collected for "Hunger 1997: The Faces & Facts" has contributed to the most comprehensive analysis of charitable hunger-relief efforts ever conducted on a broad, national scale.

"Hunger 1997: The Faces & Facts" research study was funded with generous grants from: The Aspen Institute Nonprofit Sector Research Fund; Chicago Tribune Holiday Fund; J. Willard Marriott Foundation; Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger; Nabisco Foundation; Sara Lee Foundation; Share Our Strength; and W.K. Kellogg Foundation. ●

#### NATIONAL BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR'S DAY

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise in support of the resolution designating April 1, 1998 as "National Breast Cancer Survivor's Day."

It is only proper, Mr. President, that we should set aside a day to honor the brave women and men who have survived this dread disease, which causes pain, suffering and even death for so many Americans.

Every year, Mr. President, 178,700 women and 1,600 men in the United States are stricken with breast cancer. Each of us must live with the knowledge that 1 in 9 American women will suffer from breast cancer in her lifetime. That means that virtually all of us will either be stricken by breast cancer or know someone who is.

I know in my case, Mr. President, I lost my mother to breast cancer some years ago. It was a painful experience for all of our friends and family as well as my mother herself. The pain caused by this dread disease is intense for everyone involved, and we must do everything in our power to eradicate this scourge.

Thankfully, Mr. President, we have made some progress in our battle with breast cancer. The 5 year survival rate for breast cancer victims has risen to 97 percent in cases of early detection.

Medical advances have helped more women are surviving breast cancer. Just as important, however, has been the fact that we as a nation are doing a better job of telling women about their options, and of emphasizing the importance of self-examination and regular visits to the doctor.

This is one reason, Mr. President, why I believe it is important that we honor breast cancer survivors in the manner called for by this resolution. By bringing breast cancer survivors together here in Washington, DC and elsewhere around the country, we can celebrate survivorship and publicize, not just the tragedy of breast cancer, but also the hope that is provided by research and early detection.

We need to get the message out that there are things women can do for themselves in the fight against breast cancer. We need to highlight the effectiveness of early detection and show our respect for the courage of women who have faced this disease and lived.

We have a long way to go, Mr. President, before we win our battle with breast cancer. But research, early detection and programs to make Americans aware of their options in dealing with the possibility of breast cancer all can help.

I salute the women of American who have faced breast cancer, along with the families and friends who have supported them during their time of trial, and I hope that all of us can join together, not only to mourn those who lost their battle with breast cancer, but also to honor those who have fought that battle and survived. ●

#### BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 1998

Mr. CHAFEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of calendar No. 315, S. 1605.

\*The United States Current Population Survey (CPS) defines this situation as "food insecure with severe hunger."