

Summary of 2001 Successes

Ending Poverty Around the World

Foreign Aid Dollars to Fight Tuberculosis

We were successful in getting more resources for international tuberculosis control. Deliberating the 2002 foreign aid funding bill, the House passed the Brown-Wilson-Morella-Andrews-Green amendment, which transferred an additional \$20 million to international TB programs from agencies of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. This brought TB funding in the House bill up to \$90 million bilaterally, plus \$20 million within the new Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and malaria, for a total of \$110 million. The Senate then passed an amendment, sponsored by Sens. Hutchison (R-TX) and Inouye (D-HI), to increase U.S. bilateral aid for TB from \$70 million to \$80 million.

The final 2002 compromise bill provided \$75 million in bilateral funds and \$5 million in multilateral funds.

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

The AIDS pandemic is still raging, two million people are dying every year of tuberculosis, and malaria kills one million a year, most of them children. One thing that would make a big difference in saving lives is to secure more resources for the new Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM). The Fund is to provide needed medicines, other commodities, and basic services to those who need them most.

RESULTS urged a 2001 supplemental appropriation of \$1 billion for the GFATM. Sign-on letters to the president were initiated in both houses of Congress, urging him to take the lead. The Senate letter, initiated by Senator Leahy (D-VT), called for a \$1.2 billion investment (\$1 billion for the Global Health Fund and \$200 million for USAID). The House letter, initiated by Representatives Barbara Lee (D-CA), Jim Leach (R-IA), and others, called for a \$1 billion investment for the Fund. Although over 70 Representatives signed on, we were not successful in getting the supplemental funding in 2001. However, Congress did approve \$250–300 million for the GFATM in 2002 spending bills.

In October, RESULTS sponsored a very successful news media conference call to urge increased resources to fight AIDS, TB and malaria. One of the guest speakers was the health minister of Pakistan. This event led to editorials in several newspapers including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Arizona Daily Star*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and *San Antonio Express News*.

User Fees

During the 1990s, the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and regional development banks pressured borrowing country governments to impose fees for services such as primary school enrollment and use of health clinics, which were previously free. These user fees were supposed to help the national government recover some of its costs for these services. In fact, these fees raise relatively little revenue and, by excluding poor people from these vital services, cause needless suffering and death.

In 2001, RESULTS was successful in strengthening the prior year's language that directed the U.S. representatives to the World Bank, IMF, and regional development banks to oppose any loans that included user fees for primary health and education programs. Thanks to the work of Representative Jesse Jackson, Jr. (D-IL), Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and others, the 2000 language was modified to forbid approval or "endorsement" of user fees, not only in loans, but in a wider range of World Bank, IMF, or regional bank agreements or documents.

The U.S. Treasury and the World Bank have claimed that poor people are intended to be exempt from paying many kinds of user fees. Experience in the field, however, shows that these exemption schemes don't work. The House Financial Services Committee passed legislation to eliminate the "exemption" loophole and prevent the international financial institutions from using theoretical exemptions as a justification for user fees. RESULTS will work to see this legislation enacted by Congress early in 2002.

Ending Poverty in the U.S.

Welfare Reauthorization

RESULTS volunteers raised awareness of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program in anticipation of action by Congress to reauthorize the welfare law by October 1, 2002. RESULTS and others emphasized that dramatic reduction in welfare caseloads was not accompanied by a corresponding reduction in poverty and called on Congress to make poverty reduction a central goal of the TANF program. Throughout the year, RESULTS volunteers met face-to-face with 65 representatives and 14 senators to discuss reducing poverty in the United States.

The public education effort included 18 community forums sponsored or cosponsored by RESULTS groups. In August, RESULTS cosponsored our most successful media conference call in the history of our domestic groups, which generated 38 articles, 8 editorials and 29 letters to the editor. In December, RESULTS organized a similar media conference call, featuring Children's Defense Fund President Marian Wright Edelman and Congressman Ben Cardin (D-MD). This call resulted in at least 15 pieces of media, including 10 editorials.

Early Childhood Education and Childcare

Head Start is a comprehensive federal program for low-income families with preschool-aged children. It provides preschool education, health screening, nutrition, parent involvement and assistance with parent problems. Head Start currently serves just over half of eligible 3- to 5-year old children. The increase in funding proposed for 2002 by the Bush administration was \$125 million. This amount would have been less than the anticipated cost of living and would have meant reduced Head Start enrollments.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant is a federal program that provides funds to the states that may be used to subsidize childcare for low-income families. Fewer than 12 percent of eligible families receive any federal childcare subsidy. The administration proposed increasing CCDBG funding by just \$200 million, but would have used \$400 million for a new after-school activity voucher program, which would have resulted in a cut to child care funding.

In 2001, RESULTS lobbied for a \$1 billion increase for Head Start and a \$1 billion increase for CCDBG. RESULTS volunteers met face-to-face with more than 64 representatives and 14 senators to urge their leadership in securing increased funding for early childhood programs. Additionally, they also worked to secure the signatures of almost 90 representatives on a House sign-on letter to the key decision-makers urging them to increase Head Start and CCDBG funding by \$1 billion each.

Throughout the year, newspapers published 134 letters about early childhood programs written by RESULTS volunteers and allies. In the fall, RESULTS joined forces with Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a group of law enforcement leaders, crime victims and others, to produce a conference call for journalists. This call, plus the efforts of local RESULTS volunteers, produced 25 media pieces, including 4 editorials, in favor of a larger investment in early childhood.

In December 2001, Congress increased 2002 Head Start funding by \$338 million and CCDBG funding by \$100 million.

Child Tax Credit

In early 2001, RESULTS played a significant role in achieving a major victory within the tax code for low-income families. RESULTS and others advocated for increasing the child tax credit from \$500 to \$1,000 and making the credit refundable. The child tax credit is a tax credit that a single- or two-parent family can receive for each child under 18. Historically, the credit has only been available to families paying federal income tax, meaning that families earning too little to owe federal income tax were usually ineligible, although these families often pay other taxes, such as payroll taxes. By making the tax credit refundable, low-income families who owed little or no federal income taxes would then be able to receive the credit. RESULTS volunteers were instrumental in making members of Congress aware of the importance of the child tax credit — at least 20 representatives and senators first heard about the tax credit from RESULTS volunteers during face-to-face meetings. Additionally, RESULTS volunteers generated editorials, letters to the editor and other media on the refundable child tax credit.

In the end, Congress passed a partially refundable child tax credit that will benefit families with earnings of at least \$10,000. Additionally, the money families receive from the tax credit will not count against them when determining their eligibility for income support programs such as Food Stamps. Once fully implemented, the tax credit could benefit 17 million children and lift 500,000 children out of poverty.