



March 5, 2010

Dear Representative:



As we look to the future, it is important that the General Assembly adopt a budget that does what is best for our communities and makes critical investments in public education, human services, public safety, health care, and infrastructure like roads and bridges. All Pennsylvanians - children, families, business owners, residential taxpayers, senior citizens, and others - benefit from these investments in one way or another and the vitality of the Commonwealth is dependent upon them.



Pennsylvania has the opportunity to use this time of unprecedented economic challenges to establish a more prosperous Commonwealth. To do so requires continued strategic investments in vital public services and a balanced approach to the state budget, including reforming our outdated revenue system so Pennsylvania has the necessary resources for shared prosperity now and into the future. Governor Rendell's revenue enhancement proposal released in February provides a good starting point for this discussion.



The state budget must reflect this benefit and these priorities. The budget is more than just a simple document outlining how revenue will be raised and how it will be spent; it outlines government's commitment to its citizenry and should demonstrate the General Assembly's will to invest in Pennsylvania's future by investing in its people. As members of the Coalition for Labor Engagement and Accountable Revenue, we will act collectively to see that the 2010-2011 budget - and those for years to come - reflects these critical priorities.



With your leadership and our support, we can protect our citizenry and increase Pennsylvania's economic strength. We know that this struggle does not come without its difficulties, but there is no choice but to be successful, for it is nothing less than the Commonwealth's shared public values that are at stake. A decision to balance the state budget on the backs of those in need and to reduce strategic investments not only diminishes Pennsylvania's economic competitiveness, but rather exhibits a lack of fiscal stewardship and clear planning for the future.



The organizations of the CLEAR Coalition, and the over 1.1 million members that our respective organizations represent, stand ready to work with you to develop a state budget that serves as a guiding document for our collective good - one that makes sound public investments, provides essential services to Pennsylvanians, and includes productive, stable revenues to address the needs of our citizenry now and into the future.

