

Report to Bishops on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development
Bishop Roger Morin
Chairman USCCB Subcommittee on the CCCHD
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When I accepted this responsibility as chair of this committee, I had no idea how interesting it would be. As with all of you, I would prefer to be remembered for what good has been accomplished in ministry rather than to be recognized as a result of allegations supporting activities contrary to church's teaching. The claims are outrageous.

I first want to thank so many of you for your strong support, especially the Administrative Committee, the Collections Committee and the many bishops who joined us last evening at the Bernardin award reception .

I have been asked to offer this report and I do so on behalf of our bishops' Subcommittee for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. A copy of our statement is available at your places.

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development was created by the United States Bishops to help carry out the mission of Jesus Christ to "bring good news to the poor, liberty to captives, new sight to the blind, and set the downtrodden free." (Luke 4:18) Across our nation, CCHD is helping thousands of low- income families improve their lives and communities, to seek justice and to defend their dignity. CCHD is needed now more than ever in these difficult economic times when so many families are suffering and poverty is growing. As the Bishops responsible for the oversight of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the Subcommittee pledges our ongoing efforts to ensure that all CCHD funds are used faithfully, effectively, and in accord with Catholic social and moral teaching.

Let me say a word about some of the questions and attacks on CCHD. Some are motivated by a concern for the poor and a respect for the Church, seeking answers to legitimate questions about what, how and why CCHD does what it does and how it can be made better. We welcome their questions and concern. Some others may not understand or accept the Church's social teaching on justice, a priority for the poor or the need for institutional change. But a few with their own ideological or political agendas repeat and spread outrageous claims that the bishops are funding abortion, attacks on the family and other untruths. For these groups this seems to be just another way to attack the Church and its shepherds. The same critics that constantly insist the bishops are unfaithful in our responsibilities and do not care about the unborn. I reiterate that we are absolutely pro- life from conception to natural death. We are pro-life and committed to support of life – the full spectrum of life. CCHD's work for life and dignity does not diminish, but advances our commitment to the sacredness of all human life.

We need to be clear. All CCHD grants are carefully reviewed at both national and diocesan levels and every grant is specifically approved by the local diocesan bishop. No group that acts against Catholic social or moral teaching is eligible for CCHD funding. Where problems are discovered, we act swiftly and decisively. As you recall, CCHD was the first national organization to cut off all funding to ACORN when the national problems of fiscal accountability, organizational direction and political partisanship became apparent, long before the federal government and other groups did the same. This will be the third consecutive CCHD collection where no ACORN group at any level will be considered for CCHD funding for any purpose.

If any CCHD funded group violates the conditions of a grant and acts in conflict with Catholic teaching, CCHD funding is terminated in consultation with the local diocese. For example, in the last year, three groups out of 250 (between 1% and 2%) had CCHD funding ended for these reasons. One case is one too many and we are continue to strengthen CCHD's review and monitoring processes. It is disturbing to be confronted by generalities that emanate from a single mistake- we all know the hurt resulting from those who define a universe by going from the particular to the general

CCHD is a concrete expression of the Church's teaching on charity, justice and the common good. CCHD is a pre-eminent example of what Pope Benedict XVI calls "the institutional path... of charity, no less excellent and effective than the kind of charity which encounters the neighbor directly." (Caritas in Veritate, #7).

The CCHD Subcommittee and our dedicated staff are undertaking several key tasks to build on and strengthen the great work of CCHD in communities across our nation:

- We are **ROOTING** CCHD clearly in the mission of Jesus Christ. We are anchoring the ongoing work of CCHD in Catholic social teaching. Our guidelines and criteria will express our principles in our language: the life and dignity of every person, the option for the poor, the principle of participation, solidarity and subsidiarity. The Catholic social principles at the heart of the “Catholic” Campaign for Human Development are at the center of our work. For example, the Subcommittee just approved a new summary of CCHD’s foundations and guiding principles drawn directly from the Scriptures and Catholic teaching and it is at your places.
- We are **REVIEWING** CCHD and its major elements to insure they fully reflect our Catholic principles and our unique mission of helping poor people help themselves and empowering them to improve their own communities. We encourage and will document the close connections between CCHD funded groups and the ministries and structures of our Church (more than 683 Catholic priests, 776 Catholic parishes 18 Catholic Charities Agencies and 51 religious communities are already involved.). We are using new tools to help ensure that groups keep their commitments to avoid actions which conflict with Catholic teaching and to not engage in partisan political activity. We remain committed to help low income families and communities seek greater justice through institutional change and empowerment of the vulnerable and voiceless, reviewing our criteria, guidelines, applications and contracts to insure they continue to promote this unique mission.
- We are **RENEWING** CCHD, not by abandoning or shifting its mission or principles, but by looking for new ways to carry them out in challenging times and in a more diverse community of faith. When CCHD began, it funded mostly neighborhood based efforts, now it is more congregation based, involving many Catholic parishes. Much of CCHD’s work now focuses on immigrants and their struggles to live in dignity. New challenges require new responses and we are exploring how to strengthen and adapt CCHD efforts to the changing face and the diverse causes of poverty.
- We will **RECOMMIT TO** CCHD and its unique mission, history and central place in the Church’s broader efforts to overcome poverty. We are confident CCHD will continue to carry out effectively and faithfully the mission entrusted to us by the Bishops and rooted in the Gospel: to bring Good news to the poor...and to set the downtrodden free.” (Luke 4)

As we approach this season of Thanksgiving, I want to thank all of you as bishops for the work in your dioceses to promote and carry out the mission of CCHD. You know the jobs saved the safer neighborhoods, the better schools, the stronger leaders, stronger communities the more vital parishes, the help and hope made possible by the irreplaceable work of CCHD. Thank you for all your efforts to urge Catholics to give generously to CCHD’s essential efforts to help the poor help themselves to overcome poverty, especially in these difficult times. CCHD is the Gospel at work. CCHD is faith in action.