



# Quarter News

Publication of the **George Wiley Center** & the  
**RI Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Poverty**



Issue LXVIII

March 2007

## Legislative Agenda 2007

*Utilities, Food and Income on the Agenda:*

**Amend the Comprehensive Energy Conservation, Efficiency & Affordability Act of 2006**

**2007 Bill S-0384 and H-5909 to Amend the 2006 energy act.** Moving forward from legislation with a forgiveness plan, small discounts and an energy fund in place, we want this bill to work for the people who need it. Key changes to be discussed at the forums, with expert presenters on March 24<sup>th</sup>. (See page 4.)

*No Shut-offs in homes with children under 6!*

**2007 Bill S-0546 and H-5302 to ban utility shut-offs in financially-needy homes with children under six. No child should be cold!** RI Senate Sponsors: Sens. Sosnowski, Miller, Moura, Pichardo, and Metts. RI House Sponsors: Sponsors: Reps. Naughton, Handy, Corvese, Dennigan, and Gemma.

*Increase to the R.I. Earned Income Tax Credit*

**2007 Bill S-0169 and H-6042.** RI Senate Sponsors: Sens. Metts, Levesque, Perry, and Doyle. House Sponsors: Reps. Slater, Almeida, Diaz, Dennigan, and Williams. A fair tax break for working people.

*Universal Free Breakfast for all Rhode Island Children*

**2007 Bill pending.** A phased in mandate for all public schools to offer universal school breakfast. Participation in this federally funded program doubles when school breakfast is offered at no cost to the students. This bill provides relief to family food budgets and increases students' readiness to learn, attendance, decreases hunger and ultimately improves their school performance.

*Details of Energy Amendments continued on page 4*

## SAVE THE DATES: ANNUAL FORUMS FOR MEMBERS **(PUBLIC INVITED!)**

*Utilities, Food and Income on the agenda... at all 3 forums of the Rhode Island Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Poverty. Hear from the experts, ask questions, plan action!*

**MARCH 10 – 8:30 am – 1:00 pm**

**Woonsocket Senior Center**

**JOBS/INCOME**

**RI Earned Income Tax Credit Bill  
Weatherization jobs – a fix?**

**March 24 – 1:00 pm – 4 pm**

**RI Community Food Bank, Prov.**

**ENERGY**

**No shut-offs on children**

**Amend the new Energy Law**

**MARCH 31 – 9:00 am – 2:00 pm**

**Florence Gray Center, Newport**

**FOOD & NUTRITION  
Universal Breakfast &  
Food Stamps**

**Free: If you CAN, bring a CAN**

*Call us or see inside for more details*



# Sat. March 24<sup>th</sup>

## Providence-Cranston-Warwick Community Forum-Legislative Platform

### Affordable Energy for All!

Where:	<b>R.I. Community Food Bank 200 Niantic Avenue, Providence, RI</b>
Time:	<b>1 pm – 4pm</b>
Speakers:	<b>Jean Rosiello, Esq., Board of Wiley Center, MacFadyen, Gescheidt &amp; O'Brien &amp; former Deputy Counsel, Mass. Dept. of Public Health John Howat, Energy Policy Expert from the National Consumer Law Center</b>
What:	<b>Together we can create change and eliminate poverty!</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Economic Justice: Amendments to the new Energy Law! (S-0384, H-5909)</b></li><li><b>No Utility Shut-offs in households with children under 6! (S-0546, H-5302)</b></li><li><b>Universal Free Breakfast for all Rhode Island Children (pending)</b></li><li><b>Jobs &amp; Incomes: Tax break for workers! Increase to the R.I. Earned Income Tax Credit, so all eligible workers get the full 25% credit refunded. (S-0169)</b></li></ul>
Door prize:	<b>Valued at \$50</b>
Admission:	<b>If you CAN, bring a CAN of food for the food bank!</b>
Sponsor:	<b>Sponsored in part by Working Rhode Island</b>

George Wiley Center is a founding member of the Fund for Community Progress.





Together we CAN make a difference!!!!

# Sat. March 31<sup>st</sup>

## **NEWPORT—SOUTH COUNTY—EAST BAY Community Forum-Legislative Platform**

### **End Hunger – Food & Nutrition for children!**

Where: **Florence Gray Center, Newport RI**

Time: **9:00 am – 2:00 pm**

Speaker: **Rev. John Holt,**  
**Executive Director of Red Cross of RI & former**  
**Executive Minister RI State Council of Churches**

#### **Four workshops with discussions on:**

- Universal Free Breakfast for all Rhode Island Children
- Energy Legislation to cover working low-income homes (S-0384)
- Protecting children from shut-offs (S-0546)
- RI Earned Income Tax Credit Increase to 100% refundable (S-0169)

Admission: **If you CAN, bring a CAN of food ... or more than one for the Feinstein \$1 million Hunger Challenge!!**

Sponsors: **Funded in part by MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger and Working Rhode Island**

Special Needs: **For child care or rides, call Pauline at Newport Housing, 849-7243**

## Legislative Agenda 2007 continued from page 1....

**2007 Bill S-0384 and H-5909 Details:** - Sponsors: Senators Miller, Pichardo, C. Levesque and Sosnowski  
H-5909 sponsors: Reps. Handy, Pacheco, Slater, Kilmartin, Silva

First, the Affordable Energy Plan needs to include all households eligible for federal LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program). This includes all households at or below 225% of the Federal Poverty Level.

- Distribution charges are a small percentage of the bill. Discounts on gas and electric distribution fees should increase to 100% (currently up to 50%). Discounts on oil would be available up to 50% (currently up to 25%).
- Forgiveness Plan: Current legislation details how people with terminated service can have their electric and gas restored via a payment plan that includes forgiveness on a portion of the past due bill. To ensure that the plan will work, the following amendments are required: 1) the customer would be required to make an 18% down payment (currently 25% down payment is required). 2) Any customer eligible for LIHEAP who is terminated, or who receives notice of a termination, shall be qualified to enter in the program. 3) Upon each months payment one percent (1%) of the unpaid balance shall be forgiven. 4) a customer will be dropped from the re-payment program after 3 consecutive months of failure to comply. (Instead of one month).
- Right to move: New service may not be refused to a New service may not be refused to a LIHEAP customer on an unpaid balance that has been outstanding for more than 3 years – such unpaid balance would be treated as a “Bad Debt” by the gas and/or electric company.
- Weatherization: The utility company shall refer all LIHEAP customers to local Community Action Programs (CAP) Agencies for weatherization assistance.

Your donations further our mission to build a community that addresses human need and ensures social and economic justice. Please consider giving. Thank you.



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