



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Monday, February 28, 2011

Dear Governor Walker and Members of the Wisconsin Assembly and Senate:

As faith leaders representing 809 congregations with 468,000 members throughout the state of Wisconsin, we wish you to know that we are upholding you in our prayers. It is clear that you face difficult discussions and decisions in the weeks and months ahead. May our good and gracious God grant you the wisdom and strength to face it all with compassion, collegiality and peace.

We pray that the rights of all people will be respected and represented with dignity and opportunity for fair and equal exchanges. We pray that negotiations and debates will be guided by genuine care for all opinions. We pray that partisanship will give way to community-building and shared effort for the public good.

We ask that the rights of all workers, public and private, be held in high regard. We ask that decisions that involve the livelihoods of those workers be made with compassion and shared understanding.

We ask that you defend the rights of those in our state who are most vulnerable. We ask that legislation pending would defend those whose needs are met through medical assistance, job training, child care, hunger assistance and fair and equitable housing support. We assert, with respect, that future legislation not place undo challenges on those in our state who can least afford to bear those burdens.

Like you, we face times when we are tempted to push one agenda at the expense of another. Like you, we hear from people who wish to have their way rather than seek a fair and equitable compromise. Like you, we are well aware of pressures that form when difficult decisions must be made.

We agree that there are serious financial challenges before us all. Our consciences demand that we earnestly defend the rights and the dignity of the weakest and poorest among us. We hope you will seek to do the same.

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We give thanks for your service to the people of Wisconsin. We wish you to know that our prayers for your best efforts and personal well-being are on going and heartfelt. We call on you to do your best to insure good-faith debate and legislation for the benefit of all.

With respect,

Bishop Thomas Skrenes
Northern Great Lakes Synod

Bishop Duane Pederson
Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Bishop Jim Arends
La Crosse Area Synod

Bishop Jeff Barrow
Greater Milwaukee Synod

Bishop Jim Justman
East Central Synod of Wisconsin

Bishop Bruce Burnside
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin