



*Department of Social Development and World Peace*

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June 20, 2007

The Honorable Maxine Waters  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Spencer Bachus  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Waters and Mr. Bachus,

As Chairman of the Committee on International Policy of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I wish to congratulate you for the introduction of the Jubilee Act for Responsible Lending and Expanded Debt Cancellation of 2007 (HR 2634) and to offer support for its passage.

Inspired by the call of our late, beloved Pope John Paul II, USCCB has long been a strong advocate of lifting the heavy burden of debt from the backs of millions of people living in the world's poorest countries. We would like to express our sincere appreciation for the sustained leadership that you have demonstrated on this issue in the House over many years.

As you know, since 1999 major new debt relief initiatives have been adopted by the international community. These initiatives have resulted in the reduction of the debt of 22 poor countries by over \$60 billion. Another 19 countries are receiving, or are potentially eligible to receive, billions more in debt cancellation. These reductions are freeing up substantial funds each year for expenditures in education, health and other investments essential for improving the lives of poor people.

Despite this progress, a substantial number of needy countries are not eligible for the existing debt relief initiatives. HR 2634 represents a major new step towards correcting this deficiency and making debt cancellation a reality for virtually all very poor countries that have participatory processes and financial management systems sufficient to assure that debt cancellation savings will be used to benefit the poor. We look forward to working with you and your Congressional colleagues to help complete the unfinished business of poor country debt relief.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski  
Bishop of Orlando  
Chairman, International Policy Committee