



New Hampshire Council of Churches

People of faith strengthening New Hampshire communities.

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Joint Statement on State Budgeting

The New Hampshire Council of Churches, an ecumenical Christian body of ten diverse denominations including Protestant, Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christian traditions, believes that adopting a budget is essentially a moral and value-based process, rather than a strictly fiduciary one. We urge our government to examine closely the budget it proposes to determine whether its provisions are fair and just.

Christian Scripture tells us that, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21; Luke 12:34) With these words, Jesus reminds us that the choices we make in spending both reflect and reinforce our values. If we are careful to pay attention to issues of morality when planning the state budget, not only can we be confident that our resources will be used wisely, but we can also rest steadfast in the strengthening of our shared future for the common good. However, if we pay closer attention to other matters, such as political gain or personal interests, we become complicit in eroding our social value system.

Any proposed budget, then, should take particular care to adequately provide for those who are dependent on the state for their standard of life. This includes, but is not limited to, the mentally, physically, or developmentally disabled, the impoverished elderly, children, and the unemployed. It is essential that all of God’s children, including the poor and sick, the old and young, are able to receive the providence necessary to maintain quality, meaningful lives. The budget should also take care to protect the environment, which is God’s creation and one of New Hampshire’s greatest resources, and to promote justice and equality by providing for basic human needs in health care, education, housing, etc. It should spread its burden and rewards fairly while not excluding some from our state’s bounty and opportunity.

Our state government’s mandate comes from the people, and ultimately, from the God who calls each person to civic duty. We urge our lawmakers to assess any proposed government budget as a document that reflects New Hampshire’s’ best moral values, and who we are as children of God.

Adopted by the Board of Directors May 20, 2010

Member Denominations: American Baptist, Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Friends, Greek Orthodox, Presbyterian Church/USA, Roman Catholic, United Church of Christ, United Methodist, Unitarian Universalist