

Geoff Canada
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September 4, 2012

President Barack Obama
Obama for America
P.O. Box 803638
Chicago, IL 60680

Re: Child Poverty

Dear President Obama,

As the 2012 Presidential campaign enters its final months, we greatly appreciate your continued commitment to addressing the many challenges the country faces, which will require a focused, long-term strategy.

We care deeply about the well-being of children and ask that you please *clarify your position with respect to meeting the needs of the 22% of America's children who are living in poverty*. We are concerned for today's children, as well as the next generation. America's children are in grave danger of being unable to reach their full potential that they –and the rest of America –will depend on in the decades to come.

We also believe that critical milestones in a child's growth and development necessitate timely interventions and the need to ensure that preventable and manageable adversities do not interfere with optimal health and well-being of any child. In other words, *while the overlying challenges of poverty and job creation are being addressed*, we are interested to know the following:

- 1. What are your plans to ensure that (a) comprehensive health care, (b) quality educational opportunity beginning with appropriate pre-school programs, and (c) food security are available for all at-risk, vulnerable children?**
- 2. What will you pledge to do in your first 100 days to address childhood poverty?**
- 3. What is your long-term vision for how to permanently ensure that future generations of children will not have to face the specter of crushing poverty?**

Despite your well-articulated positions on a wide range of subjects, we find a lack of specific mention in public forums or on your campaign website of how your policies will work to end childhood poverty in the United States. We write to give you the opportunity to communicate your vision on addressing childhood poverty to the American people.

We intend to share your responses with the public, and we have sent an identical request to Governor Romney. We would greatly appreciate a reply by Friday, September 14.

Please direct your responses and any questions to Irwin Redlener at 215 West 125th Street, Suite 301, New York, NY 10027. He can also be reached at ir2110@columbia.edu and 212-535-9707.

We thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

With Best Regards,



Geoff Canada
Harlem Children's Zone



Irwin Redlener, MD
Children's Health Fund
Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health



Bruce Lesley
First Focus



Michael Pettit
Every Child Matters



Bill Shore
Share Our Strength



Mark K. Shriver
Save the Children