



Jewish Community Relations Council  
OF GREATER DALLAS

## **A STATEMENT FROM** **MEMBERS OF THE RABBINIC ASSOCIATION OF GREATER DALLAS**

Jewish tradition calls on us to speak out and take responsibility for our fellow community members. The Torah tells us, “*If your brother becomes impoverished and his means falter in your proximity, you shall strengthen him – stranger or resident – so that he can live with you*” (Leviticus 25:35).

Poverty in Dallas is both an urgent moral crisis and a critical opportunity for action. Well over 250,000 people in the city of Dallas are mired in poverty, and struggle to provide for the basic needs of their families. The economic hard times are only making this situation more desperate.

The Jewish community has come together through the Anti-Poverty Campaign of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Dallas to raise awareness of the realities of poverty and find creative solutions. Our congregations have taken up the task of addressing poverty and are providing much needed help through food drives, clothing drives, employment counseling and more.

Dignity comes from work and self-sufficiency, and so we urge the development of increased opportunities for those in poverty to find good jobs with decent wages. Everyone should have an opportunity to work, and all those who work full-time should find themselves free of the burden of poverty.

The growth of the clean-energy sector, and the thousands of jobs being created, provides an important opportunity to provide long-term pathways out of poverty. These jobs have the added benefit of working to protect the environment that we all depend on and that God has entrusted to us. We support the development of skills-training programs and other initiatives designed to help low-income people access these new “green” jobs.

The plight of those in poverty is our responsibility. For God commands us, “*Thou shalt surely open thy hand unto thy poor and needy brother, in thy land*” (Deuteronomy 15:11). Now is the time for the Jewish Community to act with renewed vigor to face this gravest of moral challenges. We call on members of the Jewish community to:

- Work within their congregations and Jewish organizations and with the Dallas JCRC to educate others about this critical issue;
- Seek out volunteer service opportunities that make a real difference in people’s lives;
- Contact their elected officials to ask them to support legislation that promotes pathways out of poverty.

Signed:

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Rabbi Adam Allenberg; Rabbi Ana Bonnheim; Rabbi Heidi Coretz; Rabbi William Gershon; Rabbi David Glickman;  
Rabbi Oren Hayon; Rabbi Nancy Kasten; Rabbi Joseph Menashe; Rabbi Andrew Paley; Rabbi Jordan Parr; Rabbi  
Wendy Pein; Rabbi Ari Perl; Rabbi Debra Robbins; Rabbi Jeremy Schneider; Rabbi David Stern; Rabbi Stefan  
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