



PRESS RELEASE
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Media Contact: Sheila Consaul
703.683.7871
sheila.consaul@uwa.unitedway.org

Patrick Lester
443-822-4791
patrick.lester@uwa.unitedway.org

***United Way Calls Congressional Passage of Charity Legislation
'Important Step Forward'***

Alexandria, VA – United Way of America today welcomed final passage of a package of charitable incentives and reforms by Congress. The provisions were included in a bill principally devoted to pension issues (HR 4), which the Senate passed late in the evening on August 3 by a vote of 93-5. The bill had already been passed by the House of Representatives. It now goes to President Bush, who is expected to sign it into law in the coming weeks.

The charity package includes a provision allowing individuals to make tax-free charitable contributions from Individual Retirement Accounts, as well as a number of constructive reforms addressing potential abuses in the charitable sector.

"These reforms and new tax incentives will strengthen the nation's charities," said United Way of America President Brian Gallagher. "They are an important step forward."

The package does not include a charitable deduction for individuals who do not itemize their taxes, a proposal strongly supported by United Way. However, after publicly calling on House and Senate negotiators to resolve their differences on the charitable package for several weeks, United Way of America was satisfied with and supported the final compromise.

United Way of America applauds the leadership of Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA), Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA), lead Senate sponsor of a package of charitable giving incentives, for their partnership and efforts to strengthen the non-profit sector.

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About United Way of America

United Way is a national network of more than 1,300 locally governed organizations that work to create lasting positive changes in communities and people's lives. Building on more than a century of service as the nation's preeminent community-based fundraiser, United Way engages the community to identify the underlying causes of the most significant local issues, develops strategies and pulls together financial and human resources to address them, and measures the results. United Way of America is the national organization dedicated to leading the United Way movement. While local United Ways tackle issues based on local needs, common focus areas include helping children and youth succeed, improving access to health care, promoting self-sufficiency, and strengthening families. For more information about United Way of America, please visit: www.unitedway.org.