

Budget-cutting bill passed: Poor people take the hit

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By a 216-214 vote, the House of Representatives has passed a controversial budget-cutting bill opposed vigorously as “immoral” by mainline and ecumenical church leaders late in 2005. The bill, which President Bush said he would sign, trims federal budget programs by nearly \$40 billion over the next five years. The February 1 vote by the House included no Democrats in favor.

“In spite of five straight years of increasing hunger and poverty,” commented David Beckman, president of Bread for the World, “this Congress decided to cut aid to poor people to help finance tax cuts for the wealthy.” Beckman’s reference was to Republican plans for more federal tax cuts, which Democrats say disproportionately benefit the wealthy.