

January 29, 2014

**Center for Hunger-Free Communities & Witnesses to Hunger Statement
on the State of the Union**

Philadelphia, PA - The [Center for Hunger Free Communities](#) and [Witnesses to Hunger](#) are proud to report that last evening [Tianna Gaines-Turner](#) attended the State of the Union as Pennsylvania Senator Robert Casey's guest.



Office of Senator Robert Casey

Tianna is a married mother of three and a first-hand expert on hunger and poverty, employment, and the struggles of working families. She has served as an outspoken advocate for her family and community. Like her fellow Witnesses to Hunger, Tianna shares her [photographs and personal stories](#) with elected officials, the media, and the public at large to infuse a sense of reality into the dialogue on hunger and poverty in America. Each time she speaks out, Tianna breaks common stereotypes about working families in America who struggle to make ends meet.

"I am grateful that Senator Casey invited me from Philadelphia to the Capitol Building to hear the President deliver his State of the Union address," said Tianna. "Hearing the President talk about jobs, opportunity, and the minimum wage really hit home for me. My husband and I are stuck in a cycle of low-wage work and government assistance. We dream of finding employment that pays a living wage to create our own safety net, so we won't have to worry about how to keep the lights on and still put food on the table. Last night, we saw that the President has that hope for us as well."

Tianna went on to say, "I hope the President sticks to his word when bills that make changes to programs and policies that support low-income families come across his desk. We want him to remember that people like me are working hard to make our own futures better and to protect our children."

The Center for Hunger-Free Communities at [Drexel University's School of Public Health](#) works to establish evidence-based solutions to end hunger and poverty. Based on quantitative and qualitative research and policy analysis, the Center's programs affirm that raising wages and supporting strong nutrition assistance programs are two of the most important ways to end hunger and poverty. The President's speech gave strong support for improving wages so that no family with a person working full time could still live in poverty. This is a great step forward in ensuring that America's children have enough to eat so that they can flourish and develop to their full potential.

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