



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Affordable Housing Trust Fund leads Arise 2012 agenda**

*Members set new legislative goals, affirm long-term issues at annual meeting*

A plan to create affordable housing for low-income and homeless Alabamians will top Alabama Arise's legislative agenda in 2012. Arise members set goals for the coming year at the organization's annual meeting Saturday in Montgomery. The group also voted to work for repeal of Alabama's new anti-immigration law, considered the harshest in the nation.

In addition to adopting these new priorities, Arise members reaffirmed their commitment to constitutional reform, a moratorium on the death penalty, and state funding for public transportation. Two other goals – tax reform and adequate state funding for human services – have permanent spots on the Arise agenda. Major components of the tax reform goal include untaxing groceries and ending the state's lopsided income tax deduction for federal income taxes. On the funding issue, Arise will work for consumer-friendly expansion of health coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

“We have our marching orders,” Arise state coordinator Kimble Forrister said. “Our members bring lots of ideas to the table for making Alabama a better place to live. They understand the importance of balancing long-term commitment with a timely response to emerging needs. Our two new goals this year reflect passionate concern for Alabama's immigrant community and for the acute shortage of affordable housing for low-income families.”

Arise staff will work in the coming months to educate the public and legislators on the group's target issues, in preparation for supporting legislative action in the 2012 session, which begins Feb. 7.

“Our Housing Trust Fund proposal has wide support in the House, and we're going to work hard for Senate passage,” Forrister said. “Even on our long-shot issues, like untaxing groceries, we believe somebody has to offer an alternative vision. The status quo isn't the only option. Alabama can choose to stop taxing people deeper into poverty.”

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**Alabama Arise** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan statewide coalition of 150 congregations and organizations that promote public policies to improve the lives of low-income Alabamians.