



For Immediate Release

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**CAMPAIGN TO HELP 60,000 LOW-INCOME DC RESIDENTS
CLAIM TAX BENEFITS LAUNCHES
11 Free Tax Preparation and Filing Sites Open Around DC**

(Washington, DC, January 31, 2009)...A campaign to inform the more than 60,000 eligible DC residents about the Earned Income Tax credit and other tax benefits to boost their income, formally launched today with a kick-off event at the United Planning Organization (UPO) Petey Greene Community Center in Washington, DC. The DC EITC Campaign is a partnership of DC government, business, and nonprofit organizations to promote the EITC and other tax benefits for low-income workers. The Campaign runs 11 Free Tax Preparation sites around the city, including one at UPO, and partners with DC Saves to connect taxpayers with additional resources and services to help them achieve financial security.

Today's event included free tax preparation and filing by IRS-certified preparers as well as a financial fair with information about how residents can take advantage of free financial education and matched savings programs. DC Council member Michael Brown (At-Large) was on hand to show his support for the effort.

"Each year thousands of hardworking District residents miss out on tax benefits because they don't realize that they have to file a tax return to claim the benefits. The goal of this campaign is to get the word out so that DC workers can boost their incomes through the EITC and other tax credits and that we are here to help them access those benefits with free tax preparation and e-filing," said Colleen Dailey, Executive Director of Capital Area Asset Builders (CAAB), a nonprofit organization that coordinates the DC EITC Campaign.

Approximately 50,000 DC residents claim the federal EITC each year, channeling about \$90 million in federal funds into the community. More than 46,000 of these

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residents also claim the DC local credit, the highest refundable EITC in the country, adding another \$30 million. However, according to estimates by the DC Fiscal policy Institute there are approximately 7,000 to 11,000 residents who qualify to receive these credits but don't claim them.

“Unfortunately, many residents don't realize the full benefit of these tax credits because they end up paying high fees for tax preparation. In addition, many people opt for instant refunds—which are actually loans against an anticipated refund—not realizing that there will be a fee deducted from their refund amount. We offer a safe and free alternative to paid preparers,” said Dailey.

The 11 tax preparation sites will be open through April 15. For more information about the campaign and a list of the tax preparation sites, visit www.dcsaves.org or call 1-877-Save515.

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