



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS ADVISORY

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\$20 MILLION UNCLAIMED BY WORKING FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS ***San Diego County Intensifies Campaign on Earned Income Tax Credit;*** ***Countywide Initiative Lifting Families Out of Poverty***

WHAT: **Supervisor Greg Cox**, community service providers and **working families** kick into high gear a **countywide campaign** to help more San Diego County families and individuals **take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit**.

As part of the campaign, **hundreds of volunteers** will offer **free tax preparation services** at nearly **100 sites throughout the County**.

WHO: **Supervisor Greg Cox**, First District, County of San Diego
René Santiago, Deputy Director, Health and Human Services Agency
Shaina Gross, United Way of San Diego County
Ron Wicks, Internal Revenue Service
Working families

WHEN: **FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 2007 AT 11:00 A.M.**

WHERE: **MAAC PROJECT, 663 EAST SAN YSIDRO BLVD., SAN YSIDRO**

WHY: Approximately \$20-\$25 million of Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) dollars are left unclaimed yearly in San Diego County alone. The figure jumps to more than \$1 billion statewide.

During the 2003 tax season, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors launched a pilot program that provided free tax preparation assistance to low-income workers. That year, volunteers at five sites filed 832 federal returns, generating more than \$600,000 in EITC refunds. The EITC initiative proved successful and was expanded countywide.

In 2006, free tax services were offered at 58 sites, more than 12,000 returns were filed, and nearly \$5 million EITC dollars were claimed by San Diego County working families and individuals. Since the program began, more than \$10 million EITC dollars have been returned to the regional economy.

Established in 1975, the EITC is the federal government's largest cash assistance program designed to lift low-income families and individuals out of poverty by helping them keep more of their hard-earned wages.

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