

Did the Faith-Based Initiative Change Congregations?

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ABSTRACT

We use national surveys of congregations conducted in 1998 and 2006-07 to assess whether or not the faith-based initiative increased congregations' social service involvement, government funding, or collaborations with government or nonprofit organizations. More congregations indicated interest in social services and government funding in 2006-07 than in 1998, but congregational involvement in social services, government funding, or collaborations has not increased since 1998. An in-depth local study of partnerships between congregations and nonprofit social service agencies leads to the same conclusion. The faith-based initiative did not change congregations' behavior or expand their role in our social welfare system because it overlooked congregations' longstanding role in community systems, and it was built on false assumptions about congregations' latent capacity to expand that role and the extent to which they constitute a meaningful alternative to existing organizational networks of social support.

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The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA)—welfare reform—required states that contract with outside organizations for the delivery of social services using funding streams established by this legislation to include religious organizations as eligible contractees. This legislation was the first national policy achievement of those who hoped to expand certain kinds of religious organizations' participation in publicly funded social service programs.

President Bush significantly advanced this agenda by establishing an Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in the White House, establishing similar offices in eleven federal agencies, proposing legislation applying the PRWORA provisions to additional programs and funding streams, and using the Presidential bully pulpit to draw attention to what he believed to be religion's potential to expand its role in the nation's social welfare system. This "faith-based initiative" aimed to increase the number of religious organizations submitting grant proposals to already existing funding competitions, make it easier for religious organizations to win such competitions, and encourage nonprofit organizations and local government agencies to develop new partnerships with congregations and other religious organizations. The Compassion Capital Fund (CCF), administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, is the only new federal funding stream created by the initiative. Its annual budget was \$30 million in 2002, increasing to \$57.8 million in 2007. It has awarded hundreds of mini-grants (up to \$50,000) directly to local faith-based and community organizations. The CCF also has funded dozens of "intermediary organizations" to provide training and technical assistance to small faith-based and community organizations seeking public funds, and to give capacity-building subawards to local

organizations. These intermediary organizations have awarded small grants to hundreds of local organizations, including many congregations (Kramer et al., 2005).

These Washington-based efforts inspired action at all levels of government, and also outside government, aimed at increasing the social service involvement of religious organizations, and government support of that involvement. Many states and cities appointed “faith-based liaisons,” offices, or task forces within their social service bureaucracies charged with increasing religious organizations’ involvement in publicly funded social services. These offices provided grant-writing and other sorts of technical assistance to religious organizations seeking public funds, publicized funding opportunities through mailings to religious organizations and special gatherings of clergy and other religious leaders, advocated the incorporation of PRWORA’s “charitable choice” language into state law, and established demonstration projects through which religious organizations received funds. Outside government, some charitable foundations and nonprofit social service organizations looked for new ways to encourage religious organizations’ social service work. Overall, the faith-based initiative is a policy movement that, although greatly advanced by the Bush Administration, predated that administration and encompasses more than that administration’s direct actions.¹

Congregations--local places of worship such as churches, synagogues, and mosques--were only one type of religious organization targeted by the faith-based initiative, and their significance to our social welfare system pales in comparison to religious organizations dedicated to social services, such as Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services, or Jewish Family Services. At least five aspects of the faith-based initiative, however, make clear that influencing congregations was one of its central goals. First, congregation-based programs were held up as ideal-typical examples of the local, holistic, personal, religiously-based social services that advocates of the faith-based initiative considered an alternative to social services delivered

impersonally through government agencies or large social service bureaucracies, including religious social service bureaucracies. Second, targeted local clergy were invited to conferences, workshops, and seminars on grant opportunities. Hundreds of these meetings were held around the country, and they often were attended by hundreds of clergy. Third, newsletters, brochures, websites, and guidebooks on how to apply for government grants were produced for and disseminated to congregational leaders. Fourth, many congregations were among the small and inexperienced community organizations that the Compassion Capital Fund's "intermediary organizations" identified and supported with technical assistance and capacity-building subawards aimed at enhancing their social service activity. Fifth, beyond their potential as direct recipients of government funding, the initiative sought to involve congregations as partners in programs funded through local governments as well as through religious and secular nonprofit organizations. Noncongregational grantees often were encouraged or required to develop partnerships with small, local religious organizations, which mainly meant congregations. The extensive literature examining faith-based initiative implementation includes many examples of programs involving partnerships between congregations and government or nonprofit agencies. These partnerships commonly involve congregation-based volunteers working in programs funded through other kinds of organizations.

Although "faith-based and community organization" was the official rubric for the kind of organization targeted by the faith-based initiative, the activities outlined above make clear that initiative advocates, activists, and administrators envisioned congregations as a key type of "faith-based and community organization." Indeed, one of the faith-based initiative's central, if unsupported, assumptions was that there is untapped energy, creativity, and human resources lying dormant in congregations (and other community organizations) but available for mobilization by this initiative. A related assumption was that congregation-based social services

represented an alternative to the social welfare system based mainly in government agencies and professional social service organizations. The faith-based initiative was designed to enhance this alternative system by redirecting resources from professional social service organizations (even religious ones) to congregations and other “faith-based and community organizations” whose programs were sufficiently personal and holistic to present a meaningful alternative to the current system. In official parlance, the faith-based initiative “signifies a fundamental shift in the way government works to address human needs.” The initiative “has marked a path away from large, impersonal programs designed in Washington and toward solutions built within local communities that center on the personal touch of neighbor serving neighbor.”ⁱⁱ More broadly, the faith-based initiative represented one aspect of a larger effort to enhance religion’s visibility and influence in American public life.

There were reasons to be skeptical that the faith-based initiative would indeed increase congregations’ social service involvement, public funding, or level of collaboration with government. The now extensive research on congregations’ social service activities has shown that few congregations which are not already deeply involved in social service work possess the expertise or administrative infrastructure necessary to launch serious initiatives in this area. Few congregations who are not already grant recipients have the administrative capacity necessary to secure and manage a government grant. Many congregations do not wish to receive government funding or otherwise collaborate with government in this kind of work. And when congregations become involved in social services in more than a peripheral way, but try to do so without fully connecting their efforts to existing networks of community support, they quickly realize the limits of volunteer-based initiatives, and they sometimes abandon their well-intentioned but ill-conceived efforts. More fundamentally, critics of the initiative recognized that religious organizations long have been centrally involved in our social welfare system. In particular,

congregations with the will and capacity to be more than peripherally involved in social service work already were involved before the faith-based initiative, and involved congregations are connected to larger community social welfare systems. On this view, there are not significant untapped resources in congregations waiting to be mobilized, and involved congregations and other religious organizations are part of rather than an alternative to existing community social service networks and systems. From this perspective, an initiative designed to bypass existing networks of social service providers, and one designed to engage and privilege one type of small organization rather than trying to strengthen existing networks of social service providers, was not likely to change anything important about how that system works.ⁱⁱⁱ

In this research note we use national surveys of congregations in 1998 and 2006-07 to assess whether or not the faith-based initiative increased congregations' social service involvement, government funding, or collaborations with government or nonprofit organizations. We also report results from an in-depth local study of partnerships between congregations and nonprofit social service agencies.

DATA AND METHODS

Data

We use data from two waves of the National Congregations Study (NCS), a survey of a nationally representative sample of religious congregations—churches, synagogues, mosques, temples—from across the religious spectrum. Respondents to the 1998 and 2006 General Social Surveys who said they attended religious services at least once a year were asked where they attend.^{iv} The congregations named by these respondents constitute nationally representative samples of religious congregations in the United States. In addition to the congregational cross-sections generated by the 1998 and 2006 General Social Surveys, the 2006 NCS sample also included a small stratified random sample of congregations who participated in the 1998 NCS.

NCS data were gathered via a 45-minute interview with one key informant, usually a clergyperson, from each congregation. Most interviews were conducted by telephone, but in-person interviews were conducted if necessary. The Wave I and Wave II data collection efforts were similar in most respects, but there were three important differences. First, the 2006 GSS and the 2006-07 NCS conducted interviews in Spanish, so the Wave II NCS sample contains a small number of congregations nominated by Spanish-speaking GSS respondents who would not have been in the 1998 GSS sample, and a small number of 2006-07 NCS interviews were conducted in Spanish. Second, more summertime interviews were conducted in Wave II: 34 percent compared with 20 percent in 1998. Third, there were more in-person interviews in Wave II: 22.5 percent versus 7.5 percent in 1998. We have confirmed that none of these differences between Wave I and Wave II have produced the continuities or changes we emphasize.

Overall, data were gathered from 1,234 congregations in 1998 and from 1,506 congregations in 2006-07. The cooperation rate was 85 percent in both waves. The response rate, calculated conservatively but not taking account of the GSS's own response rate, was 80 percent in 1998 and 78 percent in Wave II.^v

The probability that a congregation appears in the NCS cross-sectional samples is proportional to its size. Because congregations are nominated by individuals attached to them, larger congregations are more likely to be in the sample than smaller congregations. Although larger congregations are over-represented in the NCS sample, they are over-represented by a known degree that can be undone with weights. Retaining or undoing this over-representation corresponds to viewing the data either from the perspective of attenders at the average congregation or from the perspective of the average congregation, without respect to its size. NCS weights also adjust for duplicate nominations, for the two-stage design feature of the 2006

GSS, and for the disproportionate presence of older congregations in the Wave II sample introduced by adding the panel component to the new cross-section.^{vi}

Variables

Social Service Activity. The NCS asked congregational informants: “Has your congregation participated in or supported social service, community development, or neighborhood organizing projects of any sort within the past 12 months?” Respondents were instructed to exclude any “projects that use or rent space in your building but have no other connection to your congregation.” Respondents whose congregations participated in or supported such programs were asked to describe these programs in an open-ended way. There was no limit to the number of programs an informant could mention. The maximum number of programs mentioned by any congregation was 20. Interviewers were instructed to probe for each mentioned program's purpose, and they recorded verbatim each program description offered by the respondent. These verbatim descriptions were coded into 25 dummy variables, each one indicating a certain program characteristic. To ensure comparability, verbatim responses from 1998 were recoded into the same set of dummy variables developed for the 2006-07 responses. Two coders independently coded each verbatim response. Inter-rater reliability was at least 82 percent for each variable; remaining disagreements were resolved by a referee.

Each congregation mentioning any social service programs was asked how many volunteers participated in at least one of these programs, how much money was spent on all of the programs, and whether or not a staff person devoted at least 25 percent time to these activities. These variables enable us to assess the depth of congregational involvement in social services.

Qualitatively, virtually all congregations engage in some sort of social service or social ministry, and any numerical estimate of the extent of this activity depends on the exact way

questions are asked and the extent of probing. As has been noted since NCS social service results were first reported (for example in Chaves & Tsitsos, 2000, pp. 668-669 and Chaves, 2004, pp. 241-242n4), the percent of affirmative responses to the 1998 NCS's initial social services question underestimates the percent of congregations engaged in social services because more informal social service activities remain under-reported without additional probing. Recognizing this, the NCS-II probed more deeply. Respondents who said "no" to the initial social services question were asked: "Within the past 12 months, has your congregation engaged in *any* human service projects, outreach ministries, or other activities intended to help people who are *not* members of your congregation?" Respondents who said "yes" to this question were then asked the same set of follow-up questions asked of respondents who said "yes" to the initial question. Adding this probe led more congregations to report social service activity, and the activity reported by congregations who said "no" to the first question but "yes" to the second question tended to be more informal and less elaborate than the activity reported by congregations who said "yes" to the initial question. Assessing change over time requires constructing 2006-07 numbers that are comparable to 1998 numbers. We do that by ignoring responses to the follow-up question (and also to an additional probe asked later) and analytically treating the 2006-07 congregations that said "no" to the initial question the same way they were treated in 1998.

Government Funding. Congregations reporting social service programs were asked whether any of their programs were supported by outside funds directly provided to the congregation by other agencies or organizations. Congregations saying "yes" to this question were asked if any of these funds came from local, state, or federal government.

Collaborators. As noted above, the faith-based initiative aimed at increasing congregations' collaborations with government and nonprofit agencies, and it is possible that

such collaborations could increase even if congregations are not more involved in social services and not more likely to receive government funding. For each program mentioned, informants were asked whether the congregation collaborated with others. In the case of collaborative programs, respondents were asked to name the two most important collaborators. Responses were recorded verbatim. For each collaborator we created a variable indicating what type of organization it is: another congregation, a noncongregational religious organization, a government agency or office, or a nongovernmental nonprofit organization. This variable was coded for each collaborator for each program mentioned by each congregation. We report results from this variable at the program level rather than at the congregation level.

Interest in Social Services and Government Funding. Interest in social services and government funding can be assessed with three items included on both NCS waves. Regarding interest in social services, congregations were asked whether they have had a representative of a social service organization as a visiting speaker in the past year, and whether within the past year they had a group or meeting or class or event to plan or conduct an assessment of community needs. Regarding interest in government funding, congregations were asked if they have a policy against receiving funds from local, state, or federal government. Those who said “no” were asked, “Do you think your congregation would apply for government money to support your human services programs if it was available?” We combine responses to these two items into a single variable indicating interest in government funding.

Religious Tradition. We focus on aggregate change and continuity over time. The only subgroups we mention are denominational, distinguishing among Roman Catholic, white liberal/moderate Protestant congregations, white conservative/evangelical Protestant congregations, African American Protestant congregations, and non-Christian congregations. These subgroups are constructed based on denominational affiliations. White Protestant

congregations unaffiliated with any denomination are placed in the conservative/evangelical category.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that congregations' interest in social service and government funding has increased since 1998. The percent who had a representative from a social service organization as a guest speaker increased from 22.2 percent to 30.6 percent, and the number who had a group, meeting, class, or event to plan or conduct a community needs assessment increased from 36.8 percent to 48.4 percent.^{vii} Most directly, the percent of congregations whose key informant said that they would apply for government funding if it were available increased from 39.3 to 47.2 percent. Overall, it seems that the faith-based initiative increased the percentage of congregations that were interested in social services and government funding for that work.^{viii}

* * * * * TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE * * * * *

Behavior is another story. Table 2 shows the relevant numbers. When we examine the 2006-07 data in a way that makes it comparable to the 1998 data, there is no increase in the percent of congregations reporting social service involvement, the percent with a paid staff person devoting at least quarter time to social services, or the percent receiving government funding in support of this work.^{ix} There also is no increase in the extent to which congregational programs involve collaborations with nonprofit organizations or government agencies. In 2006-07, 4 percent of congregations reported having applied for a government grant within the last 2 years, and 6 percent reported having established a separate nonprofit organization within the past 2 years to conduct human service projects. Unfortunately, the 1998 NCS did not ask these questions, so we cannot assess change over time on these items.

* * * * * TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE * * * * *

There is no increase in the number of congregations doing social services, receiving government funding, or collaborating with government or secular nonprofits on social services, but did the faith-based initiative lead to intensified effort among congregations already involved in social service work? Not in any straightforward way. Among congregations that do social services, there is no increase in the number of programs they report, the number of volunteers they mobilize for this work, the amount of money they report spending directly on these efforts, or the percent of congregations with a staff person working at least quarter time on these programs. There is a small but statistically significant increase in the percent of involved congregations receiving government funding. Since there is no overall increase in the percent of congregations receiving government funding, perhaps this is a hint that the faith-based initiative offered funding opportunities that congregations who already were involved in social services were best positioned to pursue.

Interestingly, two additional increases among congregations doing social services emerge when we examine the percent of attendees in congregations of various sorts rather than the percent of congregations without respect to size. Among congregations doing social services, there are small but statistically significant increases in the percent of attendees in congregations with a paid staff person working at least quarter time on these programs (17.4 to 23.2 percent, $p=.003$), and the median number of volunteers working with these programs in the congregation attended by the average attendee increased from 25 to 40 (with a p value of .018 associated with the mean difference). Since there is little sign of intensified effort among congregations overall, not even among those active in social service work, these increases may point to an intriguing interaction between congregational size and change over time. That is, perhaps *large* congregations who were doing social services were doing them more intensively in 2006-07 than they were in 1998.

We will not detail the rates at which congregations reported all of the 25 social service program types that we coded from the open-ended program descriptions. As is universally found in research on congregations' social service activities, by far the most commonly reported activities involve meeting emergency needs for food, clothing, and shelter. Only 3 types of programs showed significantly increased congregational involvement both when we look at the percent of attendees in congregations with that program type and when we look at the percent of congregations (without respect to size) with that program type: disaster relief (from 7.6 to 13.2 percent of congregations reporting any social services), neighborhood clean-up projects (3.3 to 7.0 percent), and assistance with household needs such as rent, utilities, furniture, or other household items (4.6 to 10.8 percent). It seems likely that the increase in disaster relief represents an outpouring of congregation-based assistance that followed the Indonesian tsunami and, especially, Hurricane Katrina. It is difficult to know what to make of the other two increases. At any rate, these were hardly the kinds of congregational programs targeted by faith-based initiatives. The kinds of programs often emphasized by faith-based initiatives, such as employment or substance abuse prevention programs, or programs aimed at prisoners, children, or youth, show no increased congregational involvement.

Examining changes and continuities within various subgroups could be informative. For example, there is increased interest in social services among congregations within each broadly defined religious grouping, but the percent of congregations saying they would apply for government funding significantly increased only among white conservative and evangelical Protestant congregations, the group particularly targeted by the faith-based initiative and the group with the lowest level of interest in government funding both in 1998 and in 2006-07.^x In this paper we limit our attention to aggregate trends, but future research might delve into differences among subgroups.

Recent research conducted by the second author finds the same stability reported above in collaboration rates between congregations and nonprofit agencies. As part of a larger study of collaborations between congregations and nonprofit social service agencies, the second author surveyed 76 of the 109 nonprofit agencies that received money in 2007 through the United Way of Delaware. Many of these agencies collaborate with congregations.^{xi} Remarkably, even though many of these agencies are strongly connected to congregations, only 2 said that they had received state or federal funding targeted for projects with congregations—one to work with young people to develop HIV prevention messages for churches and youth groups and one for a food pantry staffed largely by volunteers from congregations. Neither of these programs, however, involved an increased number of partnerships with congregations. More broadly, only six agency leaders said that their level of partnership with congregations had increased since 2000, and in every case that increase occurred for idiosyncratic reasons such as a staff person's involvement with a church or a recent use of a church building as a meeting space. When asked directly whether the "Bush Faith-Based Initiative" affected their organizations, only one said "yes," and this was the leader of an AIDS prevention agency who said that the administration's emphasis on abstinence-only sex education had affected their message. As in the national data, this local study shows remarkable stability in the level and nature of partnerships between congregations and nonprofit organizations.

CONCLUSION

Did the faith-based initiative change congregations? Yes and no. More congregations indicated interest in social services and government funding in 2006-07 than in 1998. It is difficult, of course, to tie this change directly to the faith-based initiative, but it seems likely that the initiative's outreach to congregations, and the tremendous attention paid to this initiative in the press and in religious circles, piqued congregations' interest in social service and government

funding. The overall behavioral picture, however, is one of remarkable stability. There is a hint of intensified activity among congregations already involved in social services, but these hints are not strong or consistent enough to alter our basic conclusion. Although surveys and program descriptions of Compassion Capital Fund grantees suggest that some congregations began social service projects they would not otherwise have begun, developed collaborations with nonprofit organizations or government agencies that they would not otherwise have developed, or received government funding that they would not otherwise have received, the faith-based initiative did not broadly change congregations' behavior in this arena or their role in our social welfare system.

This conclusion is consistent with a study of a major faith-based initiative in California which found that only one third of the religious organizations who received a government grant for the first time through this initiative still had a government grant six years later (Campbell, 2008). It is too early to tell, but we suspect that this pattern—religious organizations inexperienced in social service work and/or government funding who were funded via faith-based initiatives become only fleetingly involved in this work—will prove typical.

It is possible that there is indeed a large reservoir of untapped energy and resources in congregations, and the faith-based initiative was simply ineffective in finding and mobilizing it. It is more likely, however, that such a willing and capable reservoir does not exist. National and local studies make clear that congregations occupy an important but limited place in community social welfare systems. These studies also make clear that, far from constituting an alternative to that system, congregations' social service activity depends on it. The faith-based initiative, which attempted to bypass already existing organizational networks and systems of support in favor of resourcing one small part of those systems, failed to increase congregations' role in

those networks and systems in part because the initiative was built on false assumptions about congregations' place in them.

Looking beyond the specific results reported here, it seems likely that, to effect real change in our social welfare system, not to mention in the lives of people served by it, a knowledge-based faith-based initiative would have to recognize that congregations already are part of social service delivery systems that include government agencies as well as large and small religious and secular social service organizations. There surely are ways to strengthen this system's ability to help people, but the faith-based initiative's strategy of bypassing the existing system, redirecting resources from one to another part of it, and building up one small part of it rather than building up the social service delivery network as a whole, was not likely to achieve that goal. At a minimum, our results show that, the faith-based initiative notwithstanding, congregations' important but limited role in our social welfare system has not changed substantially since 1998.

ENDNOTES

ⁱFor more on the faith-based initiative's history, implementation, and consequences see Center for Public Justice (1997), Davis and Hankins (1999), Cnaan (1999), Farris et al. (2004), Kramer et al. (2005), Kennedy and Bielefeld (2006), Wineburg (2007), Kuo (2007), and Sager (forthcoming). More detail also is available on two web sites: the initiative's official government site (www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci) and an independent site supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts and run by the Rockefeller Institute of Government at the State University of New York-Albany (www.religionandsocialpolicy.org).

ⁱⁱQuoted from <http://innovationincompassion.hss.gov/index.html>, retrieved on 28 October 2008.

ⁱⁱⁱThe large literature on congregations' social services includes Ammerman (2005, chap. 5), Chaves (2004, chap. 3), Chaves and Tsitsos (2001), Cnaan (1999), Farnsley (2003), Wineburg (2001), and Wuthnow (2004). See Lichterman (2005, chap. 5) and Omri (2008) for case studies of congregation-based groups who discovered the limits of their volunteer efforts.

^{iv}The General Social Survey (GSS) is an in-person survey of a nationally representative sample of noninstitutionalized, English- or Spanish-speaking adults (Davis, Smith, & Marsden, 2007).

^vTaking into account the GSS's 76 percent response rate in 1998 and 71 percent response rate in 2006 reduces the NCS-II response rates to 60 and 58 percent, respectively. These rates include in the denominator the phantom congregations that were not nominated by individuals who declined to participate in the GSS. Direct assessments of nonresponse bias in the NCS sample give little reason for concern.

^{vi}See Chaves and Anderson (2008) for more methodological detail about the NCS. The NCS weights are described in a document available at www.soc.duke.edu/natcong.

^{vii} Congregations also were asked if they had visiting speakers who were elected government officials, representatives of their denomination or religious group, or someone running for office. The percent of congregations hearing from denominational speakers increased slightly from 51.9 to 55.8 percent ($p=.041$); the percent hearing from elected government officials or candidates did not change at all. This context increases our confidence that the increase in social service speakers indicates increased interest in this arena and not just an increase in visiting speakers of any sort.

^{viii} All of these differences also are statistically significant if we compare the percent of attenders in congregations rather than the percent of congregations without respect to size.

^{ix} Recall that the numbers in the first three lines of Table 2 understate congregations' involvement in social services. Including responses to all of our probes on the 2006-07 survey, 82 percent of all congregations reported social service activities, 11 percent have a quarter-time staff person devoted to social services, and 4 percent received government funds. With or without the extra probes, the basic picture of congregations' social service involvement remains qualitatively the same. The vast majority of congregations do some sort of social service work, but the intensively involved congregation is rare.

^x In 2006-07, 35 percent of white conservative Protestant congregations expressed interest in applying for government funding (up from 22 percent in 1998), compared with 47 percent among white liberals, 50 percent among non-Christian congregations, 53 percent among Catholics, and 71 percent among black Protestant congregations.

^{xi} Agency respondents within New Castle County, which contains Wilmington, were shown a list of all 440 congregations in the county and asked to indicate all congregations with whom they partnered. Sixty-nine percent of these agencies reported a congregational partner. Consistent

with NCS results, only about half of New Castle's congregations are involved in these partnerships.

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TABLE 1
Increased Interest among Congregations in Social Services and Government Funding
(% of congregations)

| | <u>1998</u> | <u>2006-07</u> | <u>p value of difference</u> <u>(two-tailed)</u> |
|--|-------------|----------------|---|
| Had a speaker from a social service organization | 22.2 | 30.6 | .000 |
| Assessed community needs | 36.8 | 48.4 | .000 |
| Would apply for government funding | 39.3 | 47.2 | .000 |

Source: National Congregations Study

TABLE 2
No Increase among Congregations in Social Service Involvement, Collaboration, or Government Funding

| | <u>1998</u> | <u>2006-07</u> | <u>p value of difference</u> <u>(two-tailed)</u> |
|--|-------------|----------------|---|
| Percent of all congregations that: ^a | | | |
| Reported social service involvement | 58.4 | 45.4 | .000 |
| Have a staff person working at least quarter time on social service programs | 6.4 | 6.7 | .809 |
| Received government funding | 3.0 | 3.5 | .449 |
| Percent of all social programs on which congregations: | | | |
| Collaborated with a nonprofit organization | 25.4 | 24.7 | .530 |
| Collaborated with a government agency | 8.3 | 7.8 | .495 |
| Of congregations reporting social service programs: ^b | | | |
| Percent with a staff person working at least quarter time on these programs | 11.9 | 15.1 | .115 |
| Percent receiving government funding | 5.2 | 7.8 | .049 |
| Median number of programs reported | 2 | 2 | mean difference ns |
| Median dollar amount spent on these programs | \$1,229 | \$2,000 | mean difference ns |
| Median number of volunteers working on these programs | 10 | 15 | mean difference ns |

^aThe numbers in the first three lines understate congregations' social service involvement.

^bIn 2006-07, including only congregations saying "yes" to the first social services question.

Source: National Congregations Study