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MEDIA ALERT

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For Immediate Release

TOMORROW HOME START CELEBRATES NATIONAL EITC AWARENESS DAY WITH SENATOR KEHOE

San Diego – on Friday, January 28th, Home Start will celebrate National Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Awareness Day and officially launch its 2011 campaign to provide free income tax preparation assistance to low- and moderate-income working families in San Diego. A number of community leaders, including California **Senator Christine Kehoe, Assemblymember Toni Atkins, Ronald L. Wicks, Senior Stakeholder Relationship Tax Consultant for the Internal Revenue Service and Doug Sawyer, President & CEO of United Way San Diego**, among others, will be attending the press conference.

As a community Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, Home Start and our expert volunteers assist families and individuals with their tax returns and ensure that they receive tax credits for which they're eligible. During the 2010 filing season, VITA programs across the country directly served over 1 million underserved taxpayers. Last year, Home Start helped workers collectively receive \$6,394,277 in refunds.

"This year we expect more families in our communities to need our services as they struggle to make ends meet." Laura Mustari, Home Start's CEO says, "It is important that workers access our services where they will receive their full tax refund rather than spend their hard earned wages at a paid tax preparer. We are honored to be joined by Senator Kehoe and Assemblymember Atkins who share our goal of advancing financial security for all working families."

This year's event is particularly important in today's economy; more workers may qualify due to reduced incomes. EITC can make their lives a little easier. The credit can increase their federal income tax refunds from \$2 to more than \$5,666, depending on their individual circumstances. But to get their EITC, they must know about the credit, then file and specifically claim it.

Speakers are available for interviews pre or post event. Please contact Erich Foeckler at (619) 692-0727 x 144 to schedule.

Where: Home Start Mid-City Office – 5296 University Avenue, Suite F-2 – San Diego, CA 92105
When: Friday, January 28, 2011 – 3-4pm

*Founded in 1972, Home Start, Inc. is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit agency that provides services to children from low income families who require immediate, comprehensive solutions to ensure their safety and healthy development. Our mission is dedicated to child abuse prevention and family strengthening services. Today, Home Start reaches at-risk children right where it counts -- in the home, and then extends the helping hand to schools and the community. Some of our programs include: **Family Support Services** - Parents are taught accurate expectations of their children, how to interact with them and use positive, appropriate discipline. As a result, families are less isolated, more nurturing and cohesive. Parents are strengthened and are better able to protect their children in the future. **Therapeutic Counseling Services** are provided in the home or at our counseling centers. Services are provided on a sliding-fee scale or through the Victim Compensation Fund. **Family Self-Sufficiency Services** provide a "hand-up" rather than a handout by stabilizing families in crisis. Families are helped to move from welfare-to-work, many for the first time in their lives.*

For more information about Home Start and our programs please visit us online at www.home-start.org or call (619) 692-0727

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