

May 21, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jason Smith,
Chair, Committee on Ways & Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Crapo
Chair, Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member, Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Thune, Chair Smith and Chair Crapo, Leader Jeffries, Leader Schumer, Ranking Member Neal and Ranking Member Wyden:

The undersigned 215 national, state and local organizations write to urge you to oppose the reconciliation package as written because it leaves millions of children and families financially worse off, especially the most vulnerable. The [tax plan proposed by the House Ways and Means Committee](#) provides disproportionate tax cuts to high earners, and pays for them on the backs of low- and middle-income families by limiting healthcare, food assistance, and critical tax credits that help kids stay fed, housed, and healthy. As organizations working to secure the basic needs of children and families, we ask you to put families and kids first and oppose this legislation.

This bill will increase costs for families who can least afford it. While millionaires will get an average tax cut of \$100,000 a year under this plan, families earning under \$200,000 will, over time, [pay more in taxes or get no tax cut at all](#). Meanwhile millions of families will see their grocery bills increase and health care costs rise because of the reconciliation bill's drastic cuts to Medicaid, Affordable Care Act subsidies, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The fact that the wealthiest will get permanent tax cuts while families with the [lowest incomes will have their taxes increase](#) over time *and* lose access to basic needs programs threatens the futures of millions of kids.

These upside-down tax priorities are most clearly apparent in the proposed changes to the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Despite an overwhelming body of literature documenting that expanding the CTC is [one of the best ways to help families with rising costs](#), this bill sharply limits who can access the credit *and* how much of it they can claim. Make no mistake: these moves will push more children into poverty. Instead of widening the gap between the haves and have-nots, [Congress should expand](#) the CTC so that it provides regular and meaningful support to families trying to get by.

Locking nearly 20 million of the poorest kids out of full benefits is antithetical to the goals of the CTC. Right now, 17 million—[one in four](#)—kids are excluded from the full \$2,000 CTC because their family income is too low. It has been a primary focus of [House](#) and [Senate](#) Democrats to reinstate eligibility for the full credit to all low- and middle-income families, the same policy that was the driving force behind cutting child poverty in half when the CTC was expanded in 2021. In stark contrast, the House Ways and Means proposal increases the maximum CTC from \$2,000 to \$2,500, but it does nothing to reinstate full eligibility for the [17 million kids](#) who are currently left out of the full credit because their families' earnings are too low. In fact, this plan would result in [2.5 million more low-income kids](#) getting less than the full credit. In other words, instead of fixing the CTC to make the 17 million lowest-income kids fully eligible, this plan will result in nearly 20 million of the lowest-income kids being excluded from the full credit—while higher-income families earning up to \$400,000 get a bigger credit. This change will widen the gap between families who are well-off and those who are struggling to put food on the table.

Raising the credit for millions who already have enough, while excluding the most vulnerable families from the credit, is not pro-work or pro-family. Right now, a parent working full-time earning the federal minimum wage doesn't have income high enough to receive the full CTC, and this proposal does nothing to change that. Low-income families with two or three kids must earn thousands of dollars more than single-kid families to receive the full credit for each child—again, this proposal does nothing to change that. The lowest-income families already receive the least from the CTC; boosting the credit for families who are already receiving the full credit widens inequality and leaves low-income kids further behind.

The CTC proposal does nothing to increase the credit for [650,000 children of working veterans](#). Congress has a critical opportunity to address this upside-down structure for veteran families. Consider the example of a veteran who has three kids aged 2, 5, and 8 and now works as a home health aide making \$25,600. Under current law, she receives a Child Tax Credit worth \$3,775. This proposal does nothing to increase that. Contrast this with a higher-income family with three children making \$200,000. The higher-income family currently receives a CTC worth \$6,000; under this proposal they'd get \$7,500. Expanding access to the full credit would help veterans and all low-paid workers provide for their families.

The CTC proposal strips the credit's eligibility for [4.5 million American children](#) who are currently eligible for the credit, just because their parents are immigrants. [The poverty rate among U.S. citizen children in mixed-status families is 31.5%](#)—more than three times that

of citizen children in households where all members are citizens. The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) has already denied the CTC to [1 million kids with ITINs](#) starting in 2018. Under the tax legislation currently being considered by Congress, an additional 4.5 million kids, who have social security numbers, are US citizens or lawful permanent residents, and live with a parent without a social security number, would lose access to the credit, forcing many low-income families into, or deeper into, poverty. Taking away this critical help at such an important time will hurt these kids' economic security and deny them the help they need to thrive—and it will have [lifelong consequences](#).

Instead of expanding the EITC and making it easier to access, this bill puts up hurdles.

One of the most powerful tax policies to lift up working families, the EITC has a long history of bipartisan support and a proven track record of success for families. The credit is currently only available to low- and moderate-income households who earn income from work, so it has served as both a [proven poverty reduction tool and a powerful incentive to work](#), especially for single mothers. Research shows that families mostly use the credit to pay for basic needs [like groceries, rent, clothing, and school supplies](#). In 2023, the EITC kept 4 million people out of poverty. Evidence has shown that the credit also produces significant lifetime benefits, such as better [education outcomes](#), [improved health](#), and [higher lifetime earnings and a more secure retirement](#).

Already, 1 in 5 EITC-eligible workers don't get the credit because it's too hard, complicated, or expensive to file taxes. Congress should take steps to make it easier for families to get the tax credits they've already earned. Instead, the current plan will make families with kids jump through *more* hoops to access their EITC. The new 'pre-certification' proposal for the EITC is essentially to audit every working family with kids that claims the credit—*before they ever receive a refund*—adding more layers of bureaucracy that will prevent working families from getting the credits they are owed.

A pro-family reconciliation bill would put more money in the pockets of middle- and working-class families. The current bill would increase child poverty and raise costs for millions of working families, so we urge you to vote against it. Instead of taking essential support away from the children and families who need it most, Congress should protect access to health insurance, food assistance, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and expand the Child Tax Credit so that it provides the support all children need.

As it stands, working families quite literally cannot afford this bill. We urge you, on their behalf, to oppose this legislation.

Sincerely,

National (87)

AFL-CIO

AFT

American Friends Service Committee

Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)
Americans for Tax Fairness (ATF)
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Care Income Now
Caring Across Generations
CASA
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Migration Studies
Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP)
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Defense Fund
Children's HealthWatch
Children's Rights
Church World Service
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
Coalition on Human Needs
Color Of Change
Common Sense Media
Community Change Action
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Economic Policy Institute
Economic Security Project Action
Every Mother is a Working Mother Network
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)
Family Centered Treatment Foundation
Family Equality
Family Values @ Work
First Focus Campaign for Children
Freedom Network USA
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Futures Without Violence
Global Women's Strike
Hispanic Federation
Human Rights First
Immigration Hub
ImmSchools
Indivisible
Institute for Policy Studies' Poverty Project
Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy
Kaleidoscope Traces Childcare Center
LIFT
Make the Road States
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

mBOLDen Change
Mi Familia Vota
MomsRising
NAACP
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Association of Social Workers
National Council of Jewish Women
National Diaper Bank Network
National Employment Law Project
National Immigration Law Center
National Partnership for New Americans
National Respite Coalition
National Urban League
National Women's Law Center Action Fund
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
P Street
Parents as Teachers National Center
Patriotic Millionaires
People Power United
Prevent Child Abuse America
Progressive Democrats of America (PDA)
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Results
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Share Our Strength
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
The Advocates for Human Rights
The Arc of the United States
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
TOOTRiS
UnidosUS
UpTogether
USBIG, Inc.
Voices for Progress
Women of Color/Global Women's Strike
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights
Youth Law Center
Youth Villages
20/20 Vision

State (86)

All Home
California Alliance of Caregivers

California Association of Food Banks
California Child Care Resource & Referral Network
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Latinas for Reproductive Justice
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Children's Defense Fund Minnesota
Children's Defense Fund-New York
Children's Institute
Citizen Action of New York
Citizen Action/Illinois
Colorado Fiscal Institute
COMMUNITY organizers and family issues
Connecticut Voices for Children
Courage California
Economic Security California
Economic Security Illinois
End Child Poverty CA powered by GRACE
End Poverty in California (EPIC)
Equality California
Family Forward Oregon
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute
Golden State Opportunity
Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!
Help Me Grow Michigan
Hunger Free Vermont
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Illinois Collaboration on Youth
Just Neighbors
Kansas Action for Children
Latino Policy Forum
Legal Key Partnership for Health and Justice
Lighthouse Silicon Valley
Maine Center for Economic Policy
Maine Equal Justice
Maine People's Alliance
Make the Road Connecticut
Make the Road Nevada
Make the Road New Jersey
Make the Road New York
Make the Road Pennsylvania
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center (MassBudget)
Massachusetts Head Start Association
Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)

Meals4Families
Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health
Michigan League for Public Policy
Michigan's Children
National Council of Jewish Women PA
NC Budget & Tax Center
New Mexico Voices for Children
New York Immigration Coalition
Oasis Legal Services
OpenSky Policy Institute
Oregon Center for Public Policy
Oregon Food Bank
Our Children Oregon
Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon
Pennsylvania Policy Center
Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN)
Prepare + Prosper
Promise Arizona
Public Assets Institute
RESULTS Virginia
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Silver State Equality
Southern California Immigration Project
Strategies for Children
The Children's Partnership
United Ways of California
United Way of Connecticut
United Way of New York State & 211 New York
Urban League of Portland
Utahns Against Hunger
VOICES for Alabama's Children
Voices for Utah Children
Voices for Vermont's Children
Washington State Budget and Policy Center
Western Center on Law and Poverty
Women Employed
Women Watch Afrika
COFI/POWER-PAC IL
Make the Road NY
Nebraska Appleseed

Local (42)

Alliance San Diego
ASSIST

Association to Benefit Children
Boston Medical Center
Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee (CEOC)
Catalyst Miami
Coalition of Communities of Color
Community Action Marin
Community Spring
Diverse Mosaic Community Center
Early Learning Center- Steepletown
Eastmont Community Center
Family Action Network Movement
First 5 Alameda County
Haven Neighborhood Services
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice
JVS Boston
Kaunakapili Church
Kimberly Crafton Consulting LLC
Latino Network
Liminality Consulting, LLC
Long Beach Gray Panthers
Lunas Child Care
Montgomery County, Maryland Community Action Board
Monument Impact
Mother's Outreach Network
National Council of Jewish Women Los Angeles
New Moms
NYC Family Policy Project
Rosie's Place
San Diego for Every Child
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium (SDIRC)
Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque IA
The Food Depot
Together for Kids Coalition
United Way for Southeastern Michigan
United Way Greater Capital Region
United Way Santa Cruz County
Universidad Popular
Welfare Warriors
Cali Go BIG
Greater Chicago Food Depository