



April 1, 2022

Dear Members of Congress:

Across the country, families are struggling to afford the rising costs of basic necessities while corporations lay claim to [record profits](#). The undersigned 50 members of the [Automatic Benefit for Children](#) (ABC) Coalition urge you to focus on the needs of the families and children being squeezed by inflation and make extending the expanded monthly Child Tax Credit (CTC) a top priority during any major legislative effort in the coming weeks. In particular, Congress must not extend tax breaks for big corporations without also delivering real relief for families by extending the CTC, including to immigrant children, as a step toward a permanent child allowance.

Extending the refundable monthly CTC would provide immediate, meaningful relief to more than [35 million families](#) with [65 million children](#)—approximately 90 percent of all children in the United States. According to [a recent report from Moody's Analytics](#), inflation is costing the average U.S. family an additional \$296 per month, an amount roughly equivalent to one monthly payment of the expanded CTC for a single child. This pandemic-fueled inflation is compounding a longer-term trend: the cost of raising children has been rising faster than inflation for decades. Diaper prices, for example, increased from [2019 to 2021 by 12%](#) and child care [increased by 5% since 2019](#) to an average of \$10,174 annually per young child in full-time care, and [formula shortage](#) across the country is leading to price gouging and fear for families who rely on it for their babies. These long-term cost increases hit families even as corporations [held down wages](#) for average Americans for decades.

Last year, the expanded CTC helped families deal with pandemic-related spikes in the costs of goods like gas and food and longer-term increases in expenses like child care. In 2021, a couple with two young children paid on average about \$1,000 **more** for food and gas than [before the pandemic](#). That's a lot of money for most families, but just two months of the new CTC offsets those increased expenses with the remainder available to defray other costs.

Unfortunately, since the program expired, families have been left to deal with rising costs without monthly CTC payments and the fallout has been swift. The monthly payments that lifted [3.7 million children](#) above the federal poverty line (FPL) in December lapsed at the end of 2021; by January 2022, [child poverty rates had spiked](#) by more than 40 percent. In just one month, nearly 3.7 million children, including 662,000 Black children and 1.3 million Latino children, fell below the federal poverty line. Many of the families who used monthly CTC payments to cover their basic needs [do not have the savings](#) to cover the increased costs of living.

We are concerned that even as families struggle, efforts to extend the CTC appear to have stalled in the Senate, while discussions about reviving and bolstering tax breaks for corporations have continued in earnest. When inflation hits, corporations can weather the storm and even turn record profits by raising prices beyond the rate of inflation, but families don't have that luxury. Any vote that signals Congress's support for providing tax relief to corporations without also extending the CTC expansion would send the entirely wrong message to families still struggling to recover from the pandemic and keep up with rising costs. As organizations that represent research experts, advocates, organizers, and direct service practitioners, we urge you to stand with families and ensure children have what they need to thrive by extending the expanded monthly CTC as part of any economic or tax package.

Sincerely,

Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, Inc.
Association of Children's Residential & Community services (ACRC)
Boston Medical Center
Bread for the World
Center for Economic and Policy Research
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for the Study of Social Policy
Children's Defense Fund
Children's HealthWatch
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Advocates Public Policy Institute
Community Change Action
Community Legal Services of Philadelphia
CWLA
Economic Security Project Action
Educational Alliance
Family and Home Network
Family Equality
First Focus Campaign for Children
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Futures Without Violence
Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality's Economic Security and Opportunity Initiative
Golden State Opportunity
GRACE & End Child Poverty CA
Greater Boston Legal Services
Hispanic Federation
ideas42 Policy Lab
Income Movement
Jain Family Institute (JFI)

Jewish Family Service of San Diego
Maine Equal Justice
MomsRising
Mothers Outreach Network
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
ParentsTogether Action
Prosperity Now
Ready for School, Ready for Life
RESULTS
Rights & Democracy
Rural Coalition
San Diego for Every Child
SaverLife
Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative
Stand for Children
UNIDOS US
Union for Reform Judaism
Universal Income Project
ZERO TO THREE

CC: President Biden