

August 3, 2021

Dear Members of Congress:

As organizations representing a broad array of religious beliefs and faith traditions, we thank you for the historic one-year expansions of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) programs in the American Rescue Plan. These expansions are already serving as a lifeline helping people in distress cope with the economic effects of the covid-19 pandemic. As you now work to pass bipartisan infrastructure and reconciliation bills, we call on you to invest in the future by making these expansions permanent and fully inclusive to support hardworking individuals and families.

Our values and scriptural teachings all affirm our need for policies that promote a nation where all individuals and families can live with dignity, enough food to eat, a safe place to live and a life that affords them meaningful opportunities. "If there is a needy person among you...do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kin. Rather, you must open your hand and lend whatever is sufficient to meet the need (Deuteronomy 15:7-10)."

The EITC and CTC were originally enacted as broad bipartisan poverty-fighting measures to incentivize work for low wage earners and help working families offset the cost of raising children. With the American Rescue Plan's expanded age limits and increased benefits for single low-income earners, the EITC is now reaching a greater number of hardworking Americans. The newly expanded CTC is a key solution to the deepest effects of childhood poverty in our nation, with the payments expected to cut child poverty in half. The impacts on racial disparities are even more dramatic, cutting poverty for Black children by 52 percent, Hispanic children by 45 percent, and Indigenous children by 61 percent.

EITC and CTC funds are a critical tool to jumpstart our economy as our nation recovers from the recent downturn. These funds are already going directly back into the market, with families using the much-needed payments for rent, food, medical bills, and other priorities including preparing children to return to school in the fall. These programs are critical for so many families as many states do not have a functioning program of cash assistance, and it can be nearly impossible for families to access the assistance they need when they fall on hard times. Further, Black and Hispanic children are more likely to live in states with the lowest TANF benefits, where monthly benefits for a family of three hovers at just around \$200 per month. These critical programs will not only help families struggling to make ends meet, but will also encourage family growth and improve children's long-term outcomes. The research is clear that additional income supports children's educational attainment, employment, and health.

The temporary EITC and CTC expansions have provided a much-needed boost to the community and the economy; however, we risk losing all that we have gained with the expiration of the

expansions at the end of the year. We urge you to permanently expand the EITC and CTC to support individuals and families as they recover from the pandemic and beyond. These programs should be fully inclusive, reaching all individuals and families who need it, including immigrant children, to ensure that families are able to meet their children's basic needs, weather unexpected expenses, and plan for the future.

The next recovery package provides a significant opportunity to strengthen the foundation for our nation's future. We urge you to invest in hardworking individuals and families by permanently expanding the EITC and CTC. The faith community stands ready to partner with you to build this future together.

Sincerely,

**National Organizations:**

Agudath Israel of America  
Association of Jewish Aging Services  
Bread for the World  
Catholic Charities USA  
Child Welfare League of America  
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice  
Church World Service  
Council for Health & Human Service Ministries, United Church of Christ  
Faith in Public Life  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church  
Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Jewish Labor Committee  
Jewish Women International  
Keshet  
Lutheran Services in America  
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger  
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC)  
National Council of Jewish Women  
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies  
Rabbinical Assembly  
RESULTS  
Society for Humanistic Judaism  
Sojourners  
The Jewish Federations of North America  
Union for Reform Judaism  
United Church of Christ Disabilities and Mental Health Justice  
Women of Reform Judaism

## **Local, State, and Regional Organizations:**

Bethlehem Interfaith Group  
Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council  
Buffalo NAACP Branch  
Congregation Sholom  
Faith Action Network of Washington State  
First Congregational United Church of Christ  
Georgia Interfaith Public Policy Center  
Goldring Family Foundation Center for Jewish-Multicultural Affairs  
Hinenu: The Baltimore Justice Shtiebl  
Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council  
Inspiritus  
JEVS Human Services  
Jewish Community Relations Council/American Jewish Committee – Detroit  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Broward County, FL  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Cincinnati  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington  
Jewish Community Relations Council of St. Louis  
Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford  
Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans  
Jewish Family and Career Services of Atlanta  
Jewish Family and Children's Service of Greater Philadelphia  
Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis  
Jewish Family Service of Atlantic & Cape May Counties  
Jewish Family Service of Greater Dallas  
Jewish Family Service of Greater Kansas City  
Jewish Family Service of Greater New Orleans  
Jewish Family Service of the Lehigh Valley  
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles  
Jewish Family Service of MetroWest, NJ  
Jewish Family Service of St. Paul  
Jewish Family Service of San Diego  
Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey  
Jewish Federation of Chicago  
Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven  
Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans  
Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia  
Jewish Federation of Greater Portland  
Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley  
Jewish Federation of San Diego County  
JFCS Chicago

JFS, Jewish Federation of Greater Indianapolis  
JFS Houston  
JVS Boston  
JVS Career Services  
JVS SoCal  
Leo Baeck Temple  
Metropolitan Community Church of the Lehigh Valley  
Mid Kansas Jewish Federation  
Touro Synagogue  
UJA Federation of New York  
Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley  
Zoroastrian Association of Metro Washington, Inc

cc: Senator Ron Wyden, Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Senator Michael D. Crapo, Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee  
Representative Richard E. Neal, Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee  
Representative Kevin P. Brady, Ranking Member, House Ways and Means Committee  
Members of the Senate Finance Committee  
Members of the House Ways and Means Committee