



February 11, 2020

Dear Senator or Representative,

The pandemic has left many families struggling to cover their basic expenses, like food, endangering the already precarious well-being of low-income children. Nutrition insecurity is a serious and growing problem; as many as 17 million children relied on the charitable food system in 2020.

Congress has the opportunity to ease families' financial burdens and help them feed their children by expanding the Child Tax Credit (CTC). **On behalf of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, we strongly support inclusion of the expanded CTC in the upcoming stimulus package.**

The current version of the CTC aims to fight poverty, but falls short. Currently, about 10 percent of children in the United States are ineligible for the CTC because their families make too little money to qualify. About 25 percent of children are only partially eligible. Ineligible or partially ineligible children are likelier to be Black or Hispanic than are fully eligible children.

The CTC provision included in the Democrat proposal would provide \$3,000 for children 6-17 and \$3,600 for children under 6, helping keep millions of vulnerable children out of poverty or extreme poverty. These credits could mean the difference between families putting enough food on the table and going without. They would also be a powerful investment in children's futures, because even brief stints in poverty result in lifelong harm.

Supplemental income for low-income families promotes better future health, education, and earnings outcomes for their children. It has reduced poverty in other countries. For instance, the Canada child benefit kept over a quarter million families above the poverty line in 2017-2018 while generating economic activity almost twice the size of the payments themselves.

In conclusion, we ask that Congress expand the CTC to help families raising children meet their children's basic needs, including access to nutritional foods.

Sincerely,

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