

INCOME MOVEMENT

Grassroots Organizers Deliver Petition to Congress to Protect the Child Tax Credit

More Than 65,000 Americans Demand Continued Child Checks

October 21, 2021 – Grassroots organizers across the country delivered [over 65,000 petition signatures](#) to members of Congress on Thursday, Oct. 21st, demanding that the expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC) be protected and extended. Organizers delivered signatures to the offices of Senators Joe Manchin, Kyrsten Sinema, Chuck Schumer, Ron Wyden, Mark Kelly, Ron Johnson, and Angus King, as well as Representatives Scott Peters, Stephanie Murphy, Kim Schrier, Steven Horsford, Jay Obernolte, and Kurt Schrader.

Since distribution of the Child Tax Credit checks began in July 2021, data have shown [significant decreases](#) in food insecurity and child poverty, lifting three million kids from poverty [after just one payment](#). In July, [50 moms from 50 states signed a letter to the White House](#) asking the government to permanently expand the CTC. And in September, more than [400 economists signed a letter](#) to the Biden Administration endorsing a permanent extension of the Child Tax Credit, including full refundability to ensure that the lowest income families can receive it.

“The truth is, the Child Tax Credit is the hope and support families have desperately needed for a long time,” said Keri Troehler-Duesing, creator of the Change.org petition. “This tax credit will help families across the country recover and should be in place for when the next crisis or disaster hits, for we know it’s not a matter of if, but when the next crisis will happen.”

Direct cash payments, like the monthly CTC checks, are efficient and allow recipients the flexibility of determining how to spend their resources as the economic toll of the pandemic wears on. Across the board, parents have spent their first few checks on covering basic needs: [the most common uses of the first two CTC payments](#) were purchasing food for their family (51%), followed by paying essential bills (36%), and paying for clothing and other essentials for their children (30%). “People should not have to crowdfund for the basic needs of their families,” said Jennifer, a mother of two from North Carolina who spent her first CTC payments to cover a medical appointment for her special-needs son.

Congress is currently debating whether to extend the Child Tax Credit beyond 2021, with several centrist Democrats like Sen. Joe Manchin pushing to impose work requirements for this policy to remain on the table. However, [recent studies](#) have shown that direct cash programs like the CTC don’t discourage employment, and often result in people working more because they are able to afford full-time childcare. According to [an analysis](#) by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Adding an earnings requirement would exclude children in the most vulnerable families, where parents are least able to meet basic needs, exposing these children to serious hardship.”

“The Child Tax Credit expansion is a guaranteed income for families, and is one of the most important anti-poverty programs established in recent years,” said Income Movement Founder, Stacey Rutland. “It is a lifeline for so many families struggling to get by, and will be crucial for bolstering the middle class in the wake of the pandemic and beyond. If Congress refuses to extend it, that would pull the rug out from under millions of kids who have just been lifted out of poverty. We can’t let that happen.”

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