

Earned Income Tax Credit for Childless Workers

Engage: I'd like to discuss with you a bipartisan proposal to address poverty that both House Speaker Paul Ryan and President Obama support.

Problem: There is one group of workers that the tax code actually taxes into or deeper into poverty: low-wage workers without children.

Inform/Illustrate: On a bipartisan level, Congress moved to make critical provisions of the [Earned Income Tax Credit](#) (EITC) and [Child Tax Credit](#) (CTC) permanent in December – these pro-work tax credits lifted [9.8 million people](#) out of poverty in 2014, more than any other program except for Social Security. (*If you can share how poverty or these tax credits have impacted you or others in your community, please do!*) Speaker Ryan and President Obama have proposed to expand the EITC for low-wage workers who don't claim dependents -- _____ childless workers in our state (13 million the U.S.) would benefit in 2017 under the Obama and Ryan proposals. And Senator Brown and Representative Neal have a proposal that would benefit _____ in our state (16 million), basically ensuring no American would be taxed into poverty.

Senate Call to Action: Will you speak and/or write directly to Senate Finance Committee Chair Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-OR), urging them to ensure no American is taxed into poverty by expanding the EITC for childless workers along the lines of the Brown/Neal proposal?

House Call to Action: Will you speak and/or write directly to House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI), and Ways and Means Committee leaders Kevin Brady (R-TX) and Sander Levin (D-MI), urging them to ensure no American is taxed into poverty by expanding the EITC for childless workers along the lines of the Brown/Neal proposal?

(FOR SOME HOUSE DEMOCRATS) In addition, will you co-sponsor the *Earned Income Tax Credit Improvement and Simplification Act* (H.R.902), if you haven't done so already?

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Wealth Inequality and the Racial Wealth Gap

Engage: 44 percent of American households don't have enough savings to stay out of poverty for more than three months if they lose their income.

Problem: Millions of Americans are just one job loss or one medical crisis away from financial disaster. (*If you can share how poverty or lack of savings have impacted you or others in your community, please do!*)

Inform: I believe we must reduce wealth inequality and in particular, the racial wealth gap. Right now, African American households have 6 cents for every dollar of wealth white households have (for Latinos, its 7 cents). One strategy to remedy this and build financial stability is to use tax time as a moment to build emergency savings. Tax policy should make it easy for all taxpayers to save at tax time, provide incentives for those savings to accumulate quickly through matched funds, and ensure we are protecting consumers, we can foster economic mobility.

Call to Action: Will you urge key tax leaders to make reducing wealth inequality and the racial wealth gap a top priority, using tax time as key time to accelerate economic mobility?

(FOR SOME MEMBERS OF THE SENATE BANKING and HOUSE FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE) **Call to Action:** Will you support efforts to create financial stability and economic mobility by working to rein in predatory lending, including payday loans?

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Protect and Strengthen Nutrition Programs

Engage: One in five children in the U.S. were at risk of going to bed hungry every night.

Problem: Studies show that children who are regularly hungry suffer from weakened immune systems, slowed and abnormal growth, and anemia.

Inform/Illustrate: SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) is America's first line of defense against hunger. The Census Bureau reports that SNAP lifted 4.7 million people out of poverty in 2014 – and safety net programs overall reduce poverty by about half. (*If you can share how poverty or nutrition programs have impacted you or others in your community, please do!*) Despite this success, some in Congress are pushing policies to restructure SNAP and other nutrition programs in the form of a block grant, which would undermine the ability of these programs to respond to local needs and economic downturns.

Call to Action: Will you oppose cuts to SNAP or efforts to shift the administration and oversight of nutrition programs to states?

(IF TIME) Instead, I hope you will support efforts to strengthen SNAP by increasing benefits so all families can access quality nutrition throughout the month.

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