

Generate Media on EITC and CTC

This fall, tax leaders in Congress will attempt to negotiate a two-year tax bill on several expiring business tax credits. If Congress wants to extend these credits, they must also help low-income workers and children. In 2015, when these similar business tax credits were up for consideration, RESULTS advocates and allies pushed Congress to also make improvements to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) for low-income families permanent – ensuring that 16 million Americans were not taxed into or deeper into poverty. We want Congress to follow the same precedent with any tax legislation this year.

The Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit support families, encourage work, and provide a financial lifeline to help families make ends meet. Together, they lifted 8.1 million people above the poverty line in 2017. But some are still left out. 5 million workers not raising children in the home get such a low EITC, they have the sad distinction of being the only group in America that is *taxed into* poverty. And 19 to 24-year-olds just entering the workforce don't even qualify for this "childless" EITC. Finally, the \$2,000 per child CTC, which was created to help families with the costs of raising children, is not even offered for children who need it most (families earning less than \$3,000 per year). And for low-income parents who do qualify, their maximum CTC refund is \$1,400. Meanwhile, families earning up to \$400,000 per year can deduct the full \$2,000 for each child off their taxes.

If Congress takes up any tax bills this year, fixing these holes in the EITC and CTC must be paramount, especially considering low-income families were all but ignored in the 2017 tax law. Push them to do so by generating media this month urging Congress to follow the 2015 precedent and not expand or extend any business tax credits without expanding the EITC and CTC in the same bill.

Send a letter to the editor urging your member of Congress to support expansions of the EITC and CTC in any new tax legislation

Your media makes a difference. Clippings from the local paper land on the desks of members of Congress every morning, taking special note of the issues covered directly affects their constituents.

One trick to getting your letter published is a good "hook" – referencing a story that's already been in the paper and making the substance of your letter more newsworthy. Here are some examples:

- [2018 U.S. Census poverty data](#) – The EITC and CTC lifted [7.9 million people](#) above the poverty line in 2018
- New CBPP data on [what workers would benefit from expanding EITC and CTC](#)
- Children going back to school (read about [compelling impact of EITC on educational outcomes](#))
- Stories about the election, economy, fears of a recession, or possible new tax cuts

Check your paper's print version, website, and social media feeds for a story you can tie back to helping workers and families. If you need help, contact [Jos Linn](#) to brainstorm ideas with you.

Never gotten a media piece published? Learn more in [these LTE basics](#) and join the RESULTS "Use Local Media to Move Legislators into Action" training webinar on Thursday, September 12 at 8:30pm ET. Join at <https://results.zoom.us/j/422081397> or dial either (929) 436-2866 or (669) 900-6833, meeting ID: 422 081 397#.

Sample letter to the editor to get you started:

The U.S. Census just reported that 38 million Americans were living in poverty last year, including nearly 12 million children. This fall, Congress can address this problem by expanding tax credits that help working people and families with children.

Congress is already considering legislation to extend some business tax breaks (“tax extenders”). Will they uphold the principle set in 2015 that any legislation extending business tax breaks must also include measures to help struggling families and children?

The House Ways and Means Committee has done this. It has passed legislation extending the business tax breaks while also expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit for workers not raising children – so that 5 million workers are no longer taxed into poverty – and making the full \$2,000 Child Tax Credit available to the poorest children.

Working people and children deserve a fair shot to get ahead. I urge our members of Congress [tip: include them by name] to ensure that any tax legislation this fall includes expansions of the EITC and Child Tax Credit.

Use this Media Push to Organize Others into Action

Many of you know that getting media published can be a transformative experience. When people accomplish something new, do something they never thought they could do before, and start to believe that they can make a difference, they want to keep coming back. What better way to grow your local group and our movement than offering these experiences to people you know?

They keys to creating a transformational experience are (from [the work of Dr. Hahrie Han](#)):

- Relationship – offer to write with them or provide support by checking in on their progress
- Autonomy – give them a choice of how best to write their letter (help them brainstorm hooks)
- Purpose – remind them how important these letters are to the movement to end poverty and how much you and RESULTS appreciate their efforts

Ideas for engaging others:

- Ask someone to submit a letter to at least one of our local publications on the EITC/CTC
- Ask someone to bring together a group of their friends, colleagues, club members for a letter to the editor writing workshop (offer to help train the group)
- If someone has already been published, ask them to try to get a letter in another publication in your area or state to help influence more lawmakers on the EITC/CTC
- Ask someone to hunt for hooks in your local media outlets and feed them to our RESULTS group so the group can get 10 letters submitted over the next month

For more tips on using media to engage others, join our training webinar **"Wow, I got published!" Making Media a Transformational Experience** on Thursday, September 19 at 8:30 pm ET. Join at: <https://results.zoom.us/j/586201507>, or dial either (929) 436-2866 or 669-900-6833, meeting ID: 586 201 507#. Find the materials and recording from the August 21 version of the webinar [here](#).