

August 2021

The logo for RESULTS, featuring the word "results" in white lowercase letters on a red speech bubble background.

## U.S. Poverty Monthly Action

### Tools to focus on housing and poverty

RESULTS volunteers are taking a respite this month after an outstanding first half of 2021. With over [550 lobby meetings](#), nearly [300 media pieces](#), countless calls and e-mails pushing our priorities on housing and child poverty, our volunteers have earned a break.

However, if you still want actions to take this month, below are some simple things you can do to influence lawmakers to address our underlying housing crisis and prioritize policies that can reduce poverty long-term. Although Congress will be on recess for most of the month, committee work on economic recovery legislation (which is separate from the bipartisan infrastructure package simultaneously moving through Congress) will happen behind the scenes. Push lawmakers to prioritize expanding Housing Choice Vouchers and the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit in that “reconciliation” package.

#### Attend a congressional town hall and ask a question

Members of Congress may be hosting [public events this summer](#), such as virtual or tele-town halls. Personalize the updated U.S. Poverty Laser Talks below on housing and the EITC/CTC for your specific member of Congress to ask a question at one of these events. See our [Advocacy Basics](#) for tips on asking a question at a virtual or in-person town hall.

#### Submit a letter to the editor

Members of Congress pay close attention to what local papers are saying about their performance, and are likely to read any pieces you get published during a recess. Media can generate public support and help sway lawmakers who are undecided on an issue. Use the Laser Talks below to draft your own letter to the editor on housing and/or the tax credits (you can also [send LTEs directly from our website](#)) and send them to your local paper. Personalize it with local data (contact [RESULTS Staff](#)) and call on your members of Congress by name to take action. See our [Media Basics](#) for more tips.

#### Write letters to your members of Congress

Go old school with simple and effective letters to your members of Congress. Again, use the Laser Talks below to draft a powerful letter, including why you care about the issue, urging [your representatives and senators](#) to take action. RESULTS recommends you send the letter as an e-mail or scan a hand-written letter and attach it to an e-mail to the appropriate aide for that issue (contact [RESULTS staff](#) for aide info). See our [Advocacy Basics](#) for more info on writing letters and our [Action Center](#) for additional online tools.

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### Housing Laser Talk

**Engage:** Because of rising rents and stagnant wages, even before the pandemic millions of families were paying more than half their earnings toward rent.

**Problem:** Only 1 in 4 eligible renters is able to access federal housing assistance, and people of color are more likely to be cost-burdened renters.

**Inform:** Access to housing is critical for the well-being of families, yet millions struggle to keep a roof over their heads and meet basic needs [personalize by sharing your story, more about the high cost of rent/housing and/or homelessness in your area]. Furthermore, due to historically racist policies, Black Americans experience higher rates of extremely low-income renters and people experiencing homelessness than white households. Expanding rental assistance to all eligible renters will lift children out of poverty, stably house millions of families, and start to correct the legacy of racism in housing.

**Call to Action:** Will you tell members of the House Financial Services/Senate Banking Committee to prioritize guaranteed, multi-year funding for Housing Choice Vouchers in recovery legislation?

What are your priorities when it comes addressing the affordable housing crisis?

### EITC/CTC Laser Talk

**Engage:** Starting this summer, 27 million children in low-income families can finally get the full Child Tax Credit as a monthly payment, and 5 million low-wage workers are no longer being taxed *into* poverty because their Earned Income Tax Credit is too low.

**Problem:** But these expanded credits are only in place for 2021. If they are not extended, millions of workers and children will fall below the poverty line next year.

**Inform:** The EITC and CTC together lifted 7.5 million people above the poverty line in 2019. And this year, the EITC changes will boost incomes for 17 million low-wage workers not raising children while the CTC expansion, including its new monthly payment option, can reduce child poverty by 45 percent [share your own experience and/or state data on the impact of expanding the EITC and CTC]. We must not abandon these workers and children after just one year.

**Call to Action:** Will you urge members of the Senate Finance/House Ways and Means Committee to make the EITC and CTC expansions permanent this year, including *full refundability of the CTC* so children in families with little or no income get the full value of the credit? How may I follow up with you on this?

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