



Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell:

As members of the Interreligious Working Group on Domestic Human Needs (DHN), which represents a broad array of religious beliefs and faith traditions, we believe there's a moral imperative to end child poverty which is a stain on the soul of our nation. Today, we write requesting the inclusion of a fully refundable, monthly Child Tax Credit (CTC) and expanded Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) in any end of the year tax extender package. These programs have a proven, transformative impact on the lives of children and working families and justice demands their inclusion. Further, we insist that Congress not provide any tax relief to corporations without extending the credits. Corporations should not be prioritized over children and families struggling to escape poverty.

As people of faith, we share a common call to work for an end to hunger and poverty. We believe any failure to extend the expanded CTC and EITC is a spiritual failure. In the Christian tradition, Jesus calls the faithful to prioritize the needs of the *"least of these"* and to be moved by compassion and love to meet the needs of one's neighbor. In Proverbs (31:9) we are reminded of our responsibility to *"Speak up, judge righteously, champion the poor and the needy."* In the Surah Baqarah, verse 215, Allah says, *"They ask you as to what they should spend. Say: 'Whatever good you spend should be for parents, kinsmen, orphans, the needy and the wayfarer; and whatever good you do, Allah is all-aware of it.'"* Yet we repeatedly witness policy decisions that neglect to prioritize individuals and families unable to access basic living standards.

The transformative power of the refundable credits cannot be denied. There is substantial evidence about their effectiveness in reducing poverty. The expanded, refundable monthly child tax credit in just a few months [kept 3.7 million children out of poverty](#), an astounding reduction in child poverty of 30 percent. [Research showed those funds](#) were used predominantly to pay for basic necessities such as food, rent, gas, and school expenses. Because these payments arrived on a monthly basis, they had a more meaningful impact on family budgets. According to researchers at Columbia University, [monthly payments are far more effective](#) at reducing child poverty than annual payments. A [study by the Niskanen Center](#) further shows that the Child Tax credit disproportionately helped families in rural states that have shed jobs in recent years due to trade deals and factory automation and did not lead to inflation. Importantly, the expanded EITC provided similar relief to lower-wage workers without children — for [17 million Americans, that meant \\$700 more](#) than what they would have received under the previous EITC. At a time when budgets are squeezed tighter than ever, that support can pay dividends in helping people stay afloat.

Historically, the CTC and EITC have been championed by both parties, and leaders have worked across the aisle to improve them through the years. That precedent should continue given their demonstrated effectiveness and the realization that children and families have fallen back into poverty and are struggling to pay for basic needs due to rising costs.

Congress has the power to extend programs that dramatically reduce child poverty and help millions of families afford basic costs. That's not speculation or forecasting — it's what happened when the expanded CTC and EITC took effect last year. Time is of the essence as a new study from [the Journal of the American Medical Association](#) showed that "ending the monthly payments was associated with a 25% increase in household food insufficiency by early July 2022". Reinstating these programs before the end of the year would be a landmark achievement for this Congress, and it would mean the world for our communities and for Americans of all faiths and religions.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Baptists
American Friends Service Committee
Bread for the World
Church World Service
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Franciscan Action Network
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Hindus for Human Rights
Islamic Relief USA
Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Churches
National Council of Jewish Women
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Pax Christi USA
Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness
Sojourners
United Church of Christ Justice and Local Church Ministries
The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice

cc: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate