

Preserve the Critical Investments in Families and Children in the House Build Back Better Package

TOP LINE MESSAGES

- The Build Back Better package emerging in the House of Representatives makes critical, historic investments in families and children to address many of the nation's long-standing problems, including persistent racial disparities. It will build toward a more equitable economy where everyone can reach their full potential.
- The package reflects sound fiscal stewardship. It finances a significant share of its investments by raising revenue from those who currently avoid paying their fair share: wealthy people and profitable corporations. It also reduces the cost that the government and consumers pay for prescription drugs, with these savings invested in expanding affordable health care.
- As the legislative process continues, policymakers should preserve and strengthen these critical investments, including by adding permanent reforms to bolster the nation's very weak [unemployment insurance](#) system so that workers facing a job loss can avoid a financial crisis. Similarly, the progressive revenue raisers in the emerging plan are important to retain, but more should be done to ensure rich people can't shield their income from taxation and to reduce incentives for multinational corporations to shift profits to overseas tax havens.

WHY WE NEED THESE INVESTMENTS

- **The U.S. has [higher levels](#) of child poverty** than other wealthy countries, because our government invests less in supporting families.
- **We have persistent racial disparities in wealth, income, and opportunity** that can only be addressed through a cross-cutting effort in areas such as income, housing, and health coverage.
- **Widespread economic insecurity predated the pandemic.** Over a three-year period before the pandemic, more than 1 in 3 households with children [struggled to afford](#) adequate food, shelter, or utilities. Among Black and Latino households with children, it was 1 in 2. And these hardships have been greatly exacerbated by the economic downturn caused by the global pandemic.

WHAT THE HOUSE PACKAGE DOES AND WHY IT WILL WORK

- **The House package contains policies that have [proven effective](#)** in reducing hardship and helping children succeed in school and in life. They have been in place in a handful of states or other countries, but until now they have been overlooked or underfunded at the national level.
- The House bill would reduce economic hardship by:

- **Making the Child Tax Credit permanently available to the lowest-income children.** This will [cut child poverty nearly in half](#), with particularly large impacts on Black and Latino children and children in rural communities. The increased size of the CTC would be extended through 2025. The House package would also permanently increase the EITC for adults not raising children at home.
- **Expanding access to housing vouchers.** The House package makes [historic investments](#) in reducing homelessness and housing instability, including Housing Choice Vouchers that will help 1.7 million people live in safe, stable housing. The Voucher program which serves those with the lowest incomes, including families with children, people with disabilities, and seniors.
- **Permanently closing the Medicaid coverage gap.** The House package would provide a [pathway to coverage](#) for over 2 million uninsured adults with incomes below the poverty line, most of whom are people of color living in Southern states that have refused to expand Medicaid. The package would also make permanent enhancements to marketplace premium tax credits to make coverage more affordable.
- **Reducing food hardship among schoolchildren.** The House bill [will provide](#) a summer grocery benefit to reduce child hunger when schools are out, simplify enrollment in free- and reduced-price school meals, and expand access to school-wide free meals.
- **Establishing a nationwide paid leave program.** The House package would address major gaps in the nation’s caregiving infrastructure by creating a permanent, broad-based, comprehensive, and progressive [paid family and medical leave](#) program.
- **Creating a pathway to citizenship for millions of people** including Dreamers, farmworkers, and other essential workers, a step toward providing long-term stability and greater opportunity to immigrants who have deep ties to the United States and contribute to our country’s economy and future.
- The House bill also contains other policies to strengthen and support families, including measures to **expand access to affordable child care, secure universal Pre-K, and lower the cost of college.**

ACTING AS RESPONSIBLE FISCAL STEWARDS AND CREATING A FAIRER TAX SYSTEM

- **As a wealthy nation, we can afford to act as responsible fiscal stewards** and raise revenue to help finance investments that will allow everyone to share in the nation’s prosperity.
- **The House Build Back Better package requires the wealthiest households and corporations to pay their fair share of taxes**, which will create a more adequate, sustainable, and [equitable tax system](#) without undermining economic growth.

- **Plus many of these investments have big economic returns.** When children grow up more secure and have access to better supports and education, they can be more productive in the workplace, and that can make the economy grow faster for everyone.