

Child Tax Credit

Action: Urge Congress to keep an expanded refundability of the Child Tax Credit in HR 1308!

Background: The House is scheduled to take up HR 1308, a bill to expand and extend the child tax credit as early as Wednesday (September 22). The most recent reports indicate that Congressional leaders plan to strike the original language and insert a package of tax extenders. Since the bill is already in conference when it comes to the floor for a vote it has privilege and cannot be amended.

The original language in the bill would expand the refundability of the credit from up to 10% of a taxpayer's income above \$10,750 to 15% of their income above \$10,750, providing a larger child tax credit to many of these families for 2004.

USCCB Position: Cardinal McCarrick wrote to Congressional leadership expressing his "expectation that as Congress acts to extend the various tax provisions in HR 1308 that an overdue increase in the refundable portion of the child tax credit will remain part of the package. To use HR 1308, a bill originally intended to correct the oversight of low income families in 2003, to provide tax relief for middle income families without making the needed adjustment for low income families would be wrong. I ask you to do everything you can to assure the inclusion of children from low-paid working families so that they too will benefit from this tax relief program.

"As you know, the Catholic Bishops have been strong supporters of tax policies such as the child tax credit that assist families in raising their children. The Bishops' Conference was pleased to work with Congress and the Administration in 2001 to ensure that the child credit was refundable. Once again—unless Congress acts—children in low-income working families will receive little or no benefit from current law. Our faith calls us to stand up for these families and children and insist their needs should take priority; they should not be left behind.

"An effective way must be found to expand the assistance, which is now provided to middle income families, to working poor families and their children as well. We believe it is a matter of simple justice."

Call your Senators and Representatives NOW (Capitol Switchboard 202 224-3121): Tell them that it would be unconscionable for Congress to leave out the very families the original bill was seeking to help as they extend tax breaks. Ask them to urge the leadership of the Congress to assure that the assistance, which is now provided to middle income families, be expanded to working poor families and their children.

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