

URGE YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO COSPONSOR THE CHILD POVERTY REDUCTION ACT



This month we will seek to raise awareness about the precipitous rise in child poverty in our country and urge that Congress immediately take action to prioritize our children's health and wellbeing. We will specifically urge our Representative and both Senators (if they have not already done so) to co-sponsor the recently introduced Child Poverty Reduction Act.

Background:

On September 12, 2023, the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) reported that the United States saw a significant increase in child poverty, with 12.4 percent of children (nearly 9 million children) living in poverty in 2022 compared with 5.2% of children (3.8 million) in 2021. This represents a more than doubling of child poverty in 2022 from 2021 — a record one-year increase and significant backtracking from progress made in 2021.

This historic one-year increase in child poverty in 2022 is due largely to the expiration of improvements to the Child Tax Credit included in the American Rescue Plan Act, which in 2021 had prevented nearly 3 million children from experiencing poverty. The termination of other assistance in 2022, such as the third round of Economic Impact Payments, as well as the ending of expansions to the Unemployment Insurance program also contributed to the increase in child poverty. The progress made in 2021 proved that child poverty is a policy choice — and one that is entirely preventable when our country's lawmakers have the political will to act.

Poverty, even for a short time, can have significant negative implications for children's development and future success. Poverty is linked to [worse physical health outcomes](#) for children, including chronic diseases such as asthma. Children living in poverty are at higher risk of experiencing food insecurity, which negatively impacts their [growth and development](#). This contributes to a [lack of school readiness](#) and poor children obtain lower levels of educational attainment and [earn less as adults](#) when compared to their non-poor peers. [The duration of poverty matters](#) for children — the longer a child experiences poverty, the greater the likelihood they will experience poverty as an adult. Poverty doesn't just have negative implications for individual children, but for our society as a whole, [costing our country upwards of \\$1 trillion a year in lost economic output](#).

Sadly, according to First Focus on Children's [analysis](#), our nation has continued the shameful trend of failing to invest in our children. First Focus' Children's Budget 2023 finds that U.S. spending on children, both here and abroad, accounts for just 9.89% of the 2023 federal budget, a decrease of nearly 16% in real spending from 2022. And for babies 0 to 3 years of age there was more than a [20% reduction](#).

URGE YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO COSPONSOR THE CHILD POVERTY REDUCTION ACT



Key leaders in the House and Senate have recently introduced legislation to, over the next five years, set a national target to cut by half the number of children living in poverty in our country. In the House, Representative Danny Davis (D-IL), along with Barbara Lee (D-CA), [Gerry Connolly](#) (D-VA), [Sara Jacobs](#) (D-CA) and Dwight Evans (D-PA) introduced [H.R. 5629](#), the [Child Poverty Reduction Act](#) on September 21, 2023. Over on the Senate side, the same legislation, [S. 2906](#), was introduced by Senators [Bob Casey](#) (D-PA), Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI).

If passed and signed into law, the bill would:

1. Codify into law a goal to cut child poverty in half in the U.S. within 5 years;
2. Establish annual reporting requirements measuring the effect of Federal policies on child poverty;
3. Provide a clearer picture of poverty in America by improving income data.

Take Action Now!

This month, join First Focus on Children's Campaign for Children, policy experts and other ambassadors in raising awareness with our members of Congress about the decline in U.S. investment in child wellbeing and the corresponding rise in child poverty. We will specifically be urging co-sponsorship of the Child Poverty Reduction Act in the House and Senate.

- Please call your [Representative](#) and [Senators](#) offices and ask to speak to the aide who handles Children & Family issues.
- Introduce yourself to the aide and let them know you are a constituent. If you get voicemail, leave a message and ask for a call back.
- Tell them that you are calling about the [Child Poverty Reduction Act](#) that was recently introduced and that you hope their boss can cosponsor it.
- Pull from the information above to share why this is important to you.
- When calling your Representative's office, let them know the bill number is H.R. 5629 and that they can speak to Jill Hunter-Williams (jill.hunter-williams@mail.house.gov) with Rep. Danny Davis' office for more information and to cosponsor.

URGE YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO COSPONSOR THE CHILD POVERTY REDUCTION ACT



- When calling your Senators' offices, let them know the bill number is S. 2906 and that they can speak to Sara Maskornick (Sara.Maskornick@HELP.senate.gov) in Senator Casey's office for more information and to cosponsor.
- If your Rep or Senators were one of the original cosponsors of the bill, simply thank the aide and consider thanking the member publicly for their leadership using social media. See [last month's Action Sheet](#) for tips and don't forget to tag us on FB [@Campaign4Kids](#) or X/Twitter [@ffcampaing4kids](#).
- Thank the aide for considering your request and ask them to let you know if your member of Congress can cosponsor the bill.
- Urge your friends, family and other like-minded individuals to join you in calling for support for the Child Poverty Reduction Act or to thank your members of Congress for their co-sponsorship.