

July 1, 2025

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, I write to express our profound opposition to H.R. 1, legislation that threatens to fundamentally weaken the health, nutrition, economic security, and future prospects of tens of millions of our nation's children.

At First Focus Campaign for Children, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to thrive and fulfill their potential, regardless of who their parents are, how much money their family earns, or where they live. *Yet instead of lifting up our nation's children, H.R. 1 places them in greater peril, now and for decades to come.*

This bill is being sold as a plan to “protect, preserve, and strengthen” critical programs for children. But the reality is starkly different. H.R. 1 would drive what may be the ***largest transfer of wealth in modern American history: from children to the elderly, from struggling families to the wealthiest households, and from the future to the past.***

The bill's provisions speak for themselves:

- **Over \$1 trillion in cuts to Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and the Affordable Care Act (ACA).** Children will not be immune to reductions to coverage or access to care when states are forced to reduce Medicaid/CHIP support by hundreds of billions of dollars. Significant cuts to federal funding will create a ripple effect that jeopardizes health coverage for over 37 million children and rolls back decades of progress. *That is not protecting children. Instead, it is deliberately dismantling the scaffolding that Medicaid, CHIP, and the ACA offer to promote their health and well-being, and to save lives.* The American public overwhelmingly opposes slashing and threatening the health of our children.

The proposed Medicaid/CHIP cuts will harm children through:

- Resurrecting barriers for enrolling in and maintaining CHIP coverage, such as waiting periods, lock-out periods, and annual/lifetime limits on benefits.
- Reducing retroactive coverage, from 90 days to 30 days, forcing families to worry about paperwork and costly medical bills rather than their child's health.
- Provider tax restrictions that will force states to reduce support to pediatric health care providers and even cut eligibility or benefits.
- Work requirements that jeopardize parent/caretaker coverage, threatening consistent connection to care and household financial security for children.

- These cuts will make it harder for families to afford child care and exacerbate existing challenges in the system. Nearly [one-third](#) of child care professionals are insured by Medicaid, and [43%](#) of early educator families use one or more public safety programs like Medicaid and SNAP to help with their health, nutrition, and other needs.
- **More than \$200 billion in cuts to SNAP**, which keeps over 13 million children fed and reduces lifelong health problems. *Instead of* preserving children’s well-being, it pushes more of them into hunger, which also negatively impacts eligibility for school meals.
- **An inadequate, poorly structured Child Tax Credit that rises to just \$2,200 per child – failing even to keep up with inflation since 2017 – and leaves over 20 million children with partial or no credit at all.** Meanwhile, the bill actively denies an additional 4 million U.S. citizen children the credit entirely based on their parents’ immigration status. This is not strengthening support for kids – it is cementing discriminatory “baby and child penalties” that penalize children for circumstances utterly beyond their control. Mothers having babies, children who lost a parent to death, victims of natural disasters, and larger families are all penalized under the Child Tax Credit.
- **Trump Accounts may promise \$1,000 to newborns now but are designed in ways that will balloon inequity over time – enriching wealthier families most and leaving low-income children even further behind.**
- **A costly education voucher tax credit that diverts critical resources from public schools, allows for discrimination against students, and provides an opportunity for donors to make a profit.** This legislation creates a permanent, unlimited tax credit for private school vouchers, causing immense potential for damage to public education. This tax-credit would give private schools two to three times the tax benefit of other nonprofit organizations, such as houses of worship, veterans groups, and homeless shelters. Donors could make a profit if they claim both the 100% federal deduction as well as a state deduction. School vouchers harm public schools, allow schools to discriminate against students for reasons including religion, sexual orientation, and family income, and do not improve academic outcomes. These programs disproportionately serve wealthy families who already attend private schools.
- **A ban on federal student loans for higher education programs where the majority of graduates earn less than the median high school graduate salary in their state.** This would result in child care professionals being prohibited from accessing these loans, because in every state and territory except D.C. and Puerto Rico, child care staff earn less than the median high school graduate salary. The unacceptably low compensation levels for child care staff are the actual problem that should be addressed - but instead of doing that, this bill would actually punish them for pursuing a career in a field that is already understaffed, unaffordable for families, and yet absolutely essential for the functioning of our economy.

Finally, H.R. 1 showers **trillions of dollars in tax breaks on corporations and the ultra-wealthy, while increasing the national debt by trillions more — a burden our children and grandchildren will be left to pay off for decades to come.** Cutting support for children and

borrowing from their future to pay for tax breaks for the wealthy is the very opposite of protecting the next generation. Instead, it is an outright mortgage on their futures.

None of this is speculative. We know from decades of evidence, including the National Academy of Sciences finding that child poverty alone costs our economy up to \$1.1 trillion each year, that failing to invest in children's health, nutrition, and economic security sets them up for worse outcomes, higher costs, and deeper suffering down the line. It is an unforced error of historic proportions.

America's children are already facing a convergence of crises: higher child mortality, rising poverty, surging mental health needs, increasing child hunger, and growing homelessness. They deserve policies that meet this moment with urgency and care – not bills that hollow out their supports, shortchange their futures, and falsely claim it's all for their own good.

For these reasons, H.R. 1 fails any credible “Is it good for the children?” test. It does not protect or strengthen vital supports: it guts them. It does not secure brighter futures: it burdens them with deeper debts and fewer opportunities. It is precisely the kind of intergenerational injustice we have a moral duty to stop.

We urge you to reject H.R. 1 and instead work toward legislation that genuinely invests in the health, safety, nutrition, and economic security of our nation's children and grandchildren.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bruce Lesley  
President