



For Immediate Release

Statement: Congress' Next Funding Plan Must Include More Support for America's Children

The last continuing resolution – to keep the federal government open past November 17 – failed to include funding for an expanded child tax credit, childcare programs, and WIC.

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Washington, DC— On Thursday, President Joseph Biden signed a stop-gap funding measure to temporarily keep the government open through the beginning of the new year. While Children's Defense Fund welcomes the continued operation of government services, we are deeply disappointed that the continuing resolution from Congress excludes additional funding support for major programs that assist millions of children and youth across the United States.

While negotiating a continuing resolution, Congress declined an opportunity to permanently [expand the Child Tax Credit](#) to help American families. The expiration of the 2021 expanded CTC led childhood poverty to more than double in 2022. The latest stop-gap solution did not address the "[Child Care Cliff](#)," which resulted in the expiration of pandemic-era childcare relief this fall. Now, millions of young people across America could lose access to care. The measure also did not address increased child participation in [America's WIC program](#), which is now outpacing official cost projections. Mothers and our youngest children are at risk of being turned away when they reach out for food and nutrition as states employ waitlists for the first time since the 1990s.

Lawmakers must create a long-term funding plan to keep the government open before parts of it begin to close on January 19. **Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Children's Defense Fund**, issued the following statement regarding the situation:

"Next week, millions of Americans will gather around tables of gratitude and memory with families and friends. Unfortunately, joyous conversation and laughter will be interrupted with discussion about rising costs of the food they have prepared to share and care for the children playing in the next room. Civically engaged family members will bemoan federal leaders who did just enough to get home in time for turkey and not enough to handle the nation's business.

"Let's not forget that many of these households include our nation's greatest treasure: our children. It is evident that their voices and concerns go unheard on Capitol Hill as Congress has passed yet another continuing resolution that does not prioritize young people's needs. Youth suffer due to the inaction of the leaders who should have their interests top of mind.

"Right now, in America, we're not dealing with legitimate political actors. Legitimate political actors understand their futures to be tied up in the care for their constituents. That's not what we currently find in Congress.

"Leaders must honor the labor and families of federal workers who keep this country moving yet wonder what's next because no long-term agreement has been reached. The continuing resolution did not provide supplemental support for child care which propped up families, caregivers, and the economy during the pandemic.

“This is about whether our lawmakers know what to do. It's about whether they have the courage and moral clarity to do it. Congress has not earned a holiday. Legislators should keep working to craft a spending plan which demonstrates federal investment in young people growing up with dignity, hope, and joy.”

Policy experts and leadership at Children’s Defense Fund can be made available to speak further with journalists about the need to increase funding supports for children and youth in America.

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About Children’s Defense Fund

Celebrating 50 years in 2023, Children’s Defense Fund envisions a nation where marginalized children flourish, leaders prioritize their well-being, and communities wield the power to ensure they thrive. The only national, multi-issue advocacy organization working at the intersection of child well-being and racial justice, CDF advances the well-being of America’s most diverse generation, the 74 million children and youth under the age of 18 and 30 million young adults under the age of 25. CDF’s grassroots movements in marginalized communities build power for child-centered public policy, informed by racial equity and the lived experience of children and youth. Its renowned CDF Freedom Schools® program is conducted in nearly 100 cities across 30 states and territories. Learn more at www.childrensdefense.org.