Dear Chairman Wyden, Ranking Member Crapo, Chairman Sanders, Ranking Member Graham, Chairman Neal, and Ranking Member Brady,

The undersigned organizations, who are committed to promoting the safety, health, and well-being of survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and their families, write to express our strong support for a permanent expansion of the Child Tax Credit within the budget reconciliation process. In particular, we ask you to also include families with children who do not have Social Security numbers as these are often the children whose parents are at greatest risk for violence and trafficking.

The recent one-year expansion of the Child Tax Credit under the American Rescue Plan will provide critical economic support for families and children. The Center on Poverty & Social Policy at Columbia University estimates that the one-year expansion of the Child Tax Credit will move 4 million children out of poverty, a dramatic reduction that would help countless survivors support their families and find financial security. But the current Child Tax Credit is only authorized for one year and critically, is not available to children with Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITINs). This is because the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act changed the law to require that children have a Social Security number to receive the Child Tax Credit. Without a permanent Child Tax Credit expansion that includes all immigrant children, many families will be left behind, including immigrant and migrant survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other abuses.

The impact on survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse is significant. Studies have shown that strengthening economic supports for families is a key strategy to help prevent intimate partner violence (IPV). In fact, it is one of only six strategies named by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that promises effectiveness for preventing IPV. The Child Tax Credit has the potential to lift families out of poverty, a risk factor for IPV. At the same time, increased financial stability provides survivors with more options for safety, making it easier to leave abusive relationships and provide for their children.
Immigrant survivors already face too many barriers to safety and financial security. To address these barriers, a bipartisan majority in Congress created survivor-based forms of immigration protections, including Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) self-petitions, U and T visas. However, the processing times for these applications have skyrocketed, undermining the effectiveness of these critical benefits. For example, there are currently over 271,000 individuals with pending U visa matters who are waiting over five years on average to have their U visa applications adjudicated, including noncitizen children of immigrant survivors of violence, some of whom are survivors themselves. These delays make survivors of abuse and exploitation vulnerable to further harm and leave survivors with few options to financially support their family.

We applaud a recent policy change announced on June 14th by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) that would provide employment authorization and deferred action for U visa petitioners and qualifying family members with pending, bona fide cases. But it will take time and resources for this policy to be fully implemented, and even those who are eligible face additional delays and barriers to obtaining work-authorized Social Security numbers, particularly children. These barriers to legal protections for survivors of violence coupled with a Child Tax Credit that does not include children without Social Security numbers, leaves many immigrant and migrant families behind.

Failing to include children without Social Security numbers from eligibility for the Child Tax Credit impacts children and families across the country. The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that over 1 million undocumented children will not be eligible for the Child Tax Credit. These include children throughout every state in the country, children of survivors of domestic violence, and children whose families were hit hardest by the pandemic.

These include children of immigrant and migrant essential workers – many of whom are immigrant women of color in low-wage jobs – who have shouldered a disproportionate impact of the pandemic, from higher risks and rates of COVID-19, to increased economic and employment instability, to their systematic exclusion from federal COVID-relief efforts and assistance. Despite the central role these workers have and continue to play in our collective safety and wellbeing, many still lack critical health and safety protections, workplace rights, and livable wages to provide for themselves and their families, challenges compounded for those experiencing violence. Expansion of the Child Tax Credit is essential to addressing the long-standing disparities that undermine immigrant and migrant families’ stability and security, and enable them to thrive.

The Child Tax Credit expansion will provide crucial support to many families and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other abuses. We urge Congress to make the Child Tax Credit permanent, and in so doing, ensure it includes all children- including all immigrant children- as part of the budget reconciliation process.

Sincerely,
National Organizations

Alianza Americas
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
American Friends Service Committee
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
ASISTA
Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP)
BWJP
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for the Study of Social Policy
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc.
Children's Defense Fund
Children's HealthWatch
Church World Service
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Change Action
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Equal Rights Advocates
Faith in Public Life
Faith in Public Life Action Fund
Family Centered Treatment Foundation
Family Farm Defenders
First Focus Campaign for Children
Freedom Network USA
Futures Without Violence
Hispanic Federation
Immigration Center for Women and Children
Immigration Hub
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Jewish Women International
Justice for Migrant Women
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
MomsRising
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence
National Children's Campaign
National Council of Jewish Women
National Crittenton
National Education Association
National Immigration Law Center (NILC)
National Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC)
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights
National Network for Youth, Inc.
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for New Americans
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
NIWAP, Inc.
Oxfam America
RESULTS
Rural Coalition
Save the Children
Shalom Task Force
Tahirih Justice Center
The National Domestic Violence Hotline
The Workers Circle
Time’s Up Now
Ujima Inc. The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
Vote Run Lead
Women’s Media Center
Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights

Regional, State and Local Organizations
Americans for Immigrant Justice
California National Organization for Women
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
Campesinos Sin Fronteras
Casa Ruby
Casa San Jose
Children At Risk
Colorado Latino Leadership Advocacy and Research Organization
Community Without Borders
De Campesinos a Campesinos
Farmworker Association of Florida
Grupo AMOR
Her Justice, Inc.
Hispanic Unity of Florida, Inc.
Human Rights Initiative of North Texas
Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence
La Mujer Obrera
Legal Allies PC
Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice
Make the Road New York
Michigan Immigrant Rights Center
Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA)
MN Immigrant Movement
3 Public Law No. 115-97 (2017).
5 Id.
6 Id.
9 U nonimmigrant status provides lawful status to noncitizens who have been victims of certain crimes, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and who will be, are or have been helpful to law enforcement in the prosecution or investigation of those crimes.


13 Id.