More than 100 state and local organizations call on elected officials to pass a $600 Child and Family Tax Credit

July 21, 2023, Boston, MA – Today, 107 community-serving organizations and institutions called on the Massachusetts Legislature to prioritize children and families in final tax legislation by advancing a $600 Child and Family Tax Credit and boosting the Earned Income Tax Credit. This effort, led by the Healthy Families Tax Credits Coalition and Children’s HealthWatch, comes at an urgent moment as a conference committee comprising House and Senate members negotiate the differences between tax proposals from both chambers and the Healey-Driscoll Administration.

“Establishing a Child and Family Tax Credit that ultimately reaches $600 per dependent and is indexed to inflation offers a profound and historic opportunity to address affordability and recognize the cost of caregiving for Massachusetts families” the letter states. “By putting money back into families’ pockets, family tax credits are an effective anti-poverty tool that help families meet basic needs and protect against material hardship, which in turn protects health for family members across the lifespan.”

To illustrate the impact of a more generous credit, advocates point to evidence from the temporarily expanded federal Child Tax Credit, which dramatically reduced the number of children living below the poverty line and helped families with young children afford basic needs such as food and rent necessary for good health. The letter also highlights that a growing number of states – 17 in 2023 alone – have invested in state family tax credits as an approach to increase affordability, close racial income gaps, and maintain competitiveness. Eleven states currently offer a child or dependent tax credit.

The Massachusetts Child and Family Tax Credit will support over 1 million dependents in more than 700,000 families each year, and the Earned Income Tax Credit will reach more than 400,000 low wage workers across the Commonwealth.

Read the letter here and visit here for more information about the Healthy Families Tax Credits Coalition.

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**Children’s HealthWatch, Stephanie Ettinger de Cuba, Executive Director**

“Passing the House’s more robust Child and Family Tax Credit will better support families’ ability to afford essentials for the growth and development of their children.” said Stephanie Ettinger de Cuba, Executive Director of Children’s HealthWatch and Research Associate Professor at Boston University School of Public Health. “Our research found that the federal Child Tax Credit expansion helped families with young children catch up on rent, improved food security, protected parents’ health, and supported mothers’ mental health.”

**Healthy Families Tax Credits Coalition, Charlotte Bruce, Senior Research and Policy Analyst**

“Both the House and Senate tax proposals recognize the present need to address affordability for families in the Commonwealth by including landmark expansions to family tax credits” says Charlotte Bruce, who leads the statewide Healthy Families Tax Credits Coalition. “However, we know that the more generous House proposal, which delivers a Child and Family Tax Credit nearly double the size, indexed to inflation, will go further in supporting the health and financial stability of families and ensuring that the value of the credit is maintained over time.”

www.taxcreditfairnessma.org
Massachusetts Association for Community Action (MASSCAP)
“Public policies matter. Along with making progress toward restoring fairness to our tax code, like the EITC, dependent care credits address the structural issues related to low wages and can be life changing for thousands of working people who struggle to make ends meet,” said Joe Diamond, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association for Community Action. “Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites across the Commonwealth run by Community Action Agencies and others help thousands of taxpayers access these resources which they use in their local communities to pay bills, address debt, repair cars, buy food, open banks accounts and save, and look forward to a hopeful future.”

Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, Jason Wright, Senior Policy Analyst
“This year four other states enacted child tax credits with a benefit up to $1,000 or more per dependent,” said Jason Wright, Senior Policy Analyst at the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center. “Massachusetts families can use more support, especially given the crushing weight of housing and other costs.”

Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath), Kim Janey, President & CEO
“EMPath is proud to stand alongside other community-serving organizations across the Commonwealth in calling on the Massachusetts Legislature to prioritize children and families in its final tax legislation. It’s critical that this legislation advances a $600 Child and Family Tax Credit and boosts the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) now. As an organization that directly supports over 1,300 individuals in Massachusetts through housing-based and other economic mobility programs, we hear the same thing time and time again from families in our programs: They need cash. This is especially true at a time when staggering levels of inflation are hitting those with the fewest resources the hardest. Our state legislature must take bold steps now to provide families with the level of support they both need and deserve to ensure their children can live healthy and fulfilling lives.”

Strategies for Children, Amy O’Leary, Executive Director
“Strategies for Children strongly supports a Child and Family Tax Credit of $600 per dependent indexed to inflation. This benefit will go a long way towards providing much needed financial support for families which is a major part of our Early Childhood Agenda. We are proud to stand with our partners across sectors in support of this important legislation that will impact over 1 million children and ultimately help to provide them with the resources needed to grow and thrive.”

One Family, Valerie Paric, Executive Director
“The families we serve, and thousands more like them across Massachusetts, are working hard to achieve self-sufficiency. They need help as they strive towards that goal, which is why we urge the Legislature to adopt a robust $600 Child and Family Tax Credit per dependent. To a family struggling to meet their basic needs as they progress toward self-sufficiency, that $600 per dependent would make a real difference.”

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