

The Honorable U.S. Senator Joe Manchin  
306 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

September 2, 2021

Dear Senator Manchin,

As organizations and people who care about children and families in West Virginia, thank you for your support of the American Rescue Plan Act and your vote to move the budget resolution forward. Already, families are seeing the life-changing impacts of the expansion of the Child Tax Credit, improvements in child and family nutrition programs, and health care investments. In fact, preliminary estimates show that federal programs, including COVID relief programs, reduced poverty by [71 percent](#) in West Virginia in 2021. But all of these measures are temporary and do not fully address the structural challenges that families and workers in our state have faced on their own for far too long. One of the most significant challenges is balancing obligations to care for their families along with responsibilities at work in order to provide for their families.

The budget resolution presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to improve the lives of all West Virginians by creating a stronger, fairer economy that works for all of us - not just those who the system has helped reach the top of the economic ladder. Implementing these policies and investing in our people will ensure that West Virginians and our economy can emerge from the pandemic with more opportunity than ever before. It isn't enough to go back to the status quo of child care deserts, low pay for professionals who care for our children and family members who need long-term care, and where the vast majority of workers lack access to paid family and medical leave.

We urge you to continue standing up for West Virginia families and enact bold policies that strengthen our ability to work, care for our families, and fully participate in our communities by voting for the strongest legislation possible. These investments, made over several years, will also strengthen our economy going forward by ensuring that all people are able to thrive, while expanding the capacity for our economy to absorb demand.

Specifically, we ask you to fight for a package that delivers on the need to prioritize care, education, and families by:

- making it easier for people to afford childcare, health insurance, housing, nutritious food, and a college degree;
- making us all healthier by ensuring workers can stay home to take care of themselves or their family members when they are sick or need care;
- helping families pay for the things they need by extending tax credits for families with children and people with low incomes;
- modernizing our unemployment system so all workers can expect adequate benefits if they lose their job, including those with the lowest pay who are often ineligible under current rules;
- preserving our dignity and keeping families together by allowing more older adults and people with disabilities to seek care in their homes and in their communities while strengthening the home- and community-based health workforce;

- providing a path to citizenship for millions of Dreamers, Temporary Protected Status holders, and essential workers which would keep families together and safe, boost our economy, create new jobs, and benefit all Americans; and
- paying for these investments by adjusting the tax system to ensure that large corporations and those earning more than \$400,000 per year pay their share of taxes.

America is a wealthy nation, but too many Americans don't share in our prosperity and opportunity, often because they do not have access to needed worker and family supports. The budget resolution will go a long way to address long-standing needs, strengthen our economy, and expand opportunity for Americans of all races and backgrounds.

Please reach out to any of us if you have concerns about any of our priorities, and consider us thought partners and champions for achieving these important policy priorities.

Signed,

ACLU of West Virginia  
 American Friends Service Committee- West Virginia  
 EnAct, Inc.  
 Islamic Association of WV  
 Jefferson County NAACP  
 Logan County Family Resource Network Director  
 Main Street Alliance- West Virginia  
 Mineral County CASA Program  
 Mineral County Family Resource Network Corp  
 Morgantown/Kingwood Branch of the NAACP  
 Morgantown NOW  
 Mountain State Justice  
 National Association of Social Workers- West Virginia Chapter  
 Nicholas Community Action Partnerships, Inc.  
 Our Future West Virginia  
 Planned Parenthood South Atlantic  
 Prevent Child Abuse WV/TEAM for West Virginia Children  
 PRIDE Community Services, Inc.  
 Rabbi Victor Urecki  
 Race Matters West Virginia  
 RESULTS WV  
 SEIU District 1199 WV/KY/OH  
 West Virginia CASA Association, Inc.  
 West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy  
 West Virginia Chapter of the National Organization for Women  
 West Virginia Citizen Action Group  
 West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
 West Virginia Community Action Partnerships  
 West Virginia Eastern Panhandle Health and Human Services Collaborative Health Work Group  
 West Virginia University Food Justice Lab  
 West Virginians for Affordable Health Care  
 Wood County Family Resource Network

WV Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Parents Network  
WV FREE  
Young West Virginia Forward