



November 18, 2021

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

Dear Representative:

On behalf of America's 73 million children and youth, the board, staff, partners, and constituents of the Children's Defense Fund, I write to urge you to **vote 'yes' on the Build Back Better Act (H.R. 5376)** when it comes up for a vote on the House Floor.

As you well know, the Build Back Better Act makes historic investments to help our children thrive and succeed. This bill's timing could not come sooner after decades of disinvestment and on the heels of a devastating pandemic. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, as outlined in our [State of America's Children 2021 Report](#), we were failing to provide our children with even the most basic building blocks for success—and the pandemic has only heightened long-standing racial and economic disparities. The failure to act swiftly and robustly has, for too long, limited opportunity of millions of our nation's children, particularly in Black, brown, Indigenous, and immigrant communities. Now, Congress has the unique opportunity to put America's most marginalized children and families first and advance racial equity.

The Children's Defense Fund urges you to vote in favor of the sweeping reforms and investments included in the Build Back Better Act. In particular, we are pleased to see hard-fought victory for our children and families, including extending for one year the expanded and successful Child Tax Credit (CTC) and restoring eligibility for immigrant children; preventing eviction and homelessness with \$150 billion for more affordable homes; extending healthy meals in the classroom to [nine million more children](#); establishing the nation's first national, comprehensive paid leave program; guaranteeing access to free, high-quality universal preschool for all three- and four-year-olds; making child care more affordable and free for families with the lowest incomes; expanding affordable health care for millions of parents and ensuring the children enrolled in Medicaid have continuous eligibility for a full year; and so much more.

The Build Back Better Act brings us one step closer to a historical, essential, and long-overdue investment in our nation's children and families. We're poised to boost families' economic stability and reduce racial inequities in income, housing, education, and health care that harm Black and brown children every day. By passing this critical legislation, we are finally meaningfully investing in our children and families. Once again, we urge you to vote **'yes' on H.R. 5376**. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me or our team member, Emma Mehrabi at emehrabi@childrensdefense.org.

For our children,

Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson
President and CEO