

# [***Republicans—Extend the Child Tax Credit. It's the Pro-Life Thing To Do | Opinion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B8J-K851-JBR6-9002-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** A conservative pro-life movement that doesn't address the economic realities that undergird abortion has no future in the United States.

**Body**

Life may begin at conception, but it sure doesn't end at birth. So I have a question for [*Mitch McConnell*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/mitch-mcconnell?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) (R-Ky.) and the "pro-life, pro-family" Republican caucus: why aren't you the biggest cheerleaders in Washington for extending the Child Tax Credit?

It's immorally expensive to raise a child in this country. [*According to the latest data,*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/it-now-costs-300-000-to-raise-a-child-11660864334#:~:text=The%20cost%20of%20raising%20a,to%20a%20Brookings%20Institution%20estimate.) it costs over $300,000 to rear a child from conception to adulthood. The Child Tax Credit seeks to right that wrong by providing much-needed financial relief for working-class families across America.

Simply put—it's pro-life.

[*The latest plan,*](https://streaklinks.com/B1npdIIRER3As3Sv6gsklanv/https%3A%2F%2Fwww.businessinsider.com%2Fchild-tax-credit-trump-breaks-might-come-back-wyden-cuts-2024-1) which was put together by [*Senate*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/senate?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Finance Committee Chair Ron Wyden (D-Or.) and House Ways and Means Committee Chair Jason Smith (R-Mo.), is a big win for working-class American families and impoverished children.

The bipartisan deal would increase refundable child tax credits and incrementally raise the current $1,600 benefit limit. It also allows taxpayers to use their previous year's income if that gives them access to more money.

Sadly, the deal doesn't include an extension of the pandemic-era cash payments sent to families with children for the first half of 2021. Nevertheless, it's a step forward for a country that doesn't yet fully grasp the childhood crisis American families are facing.

The last time [*Congress*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/congress?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) expanded the Child Tax Credit, it helped lead to [*the most significant decrease in childhood poverty in our nation's history.*](https://streaklinks.com/B1npdIgvb9ooNzPdHAOd3xgJ/https%3A%2F%2Fwww.npr.org%2F2022%2F01%2F27%2F1075299510%2Fthe-expanded-child-tax-credit-briefly-slashed-child-poverty-heres-what-else-it-d)

Before he was elected speaker of the House last October, [*Mike Johnson*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/mike-johnson?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) (R-La.) called abortion an "American holocaust." If that description is right, Johnson's Senate GOP colleagues have a moral obligation to address the root causes of abortion. While abortion is declining among American women writ large, [*it's drastically increasing among women living in poverty.*](https://streaklinks.com/B1npdIs5uVdJCxMyeQBbWe_s/https%3A%2F%2Fwww.usccb.org%2Fcommittees%2Fpro-life-activities%2Fpoverty-and-abortion-vicious-cycle)

A conservative pro-life movement that doesn't address the economic realities that undergird abortion is a movement without a future in the United States.

Want evidence? In November, Issue 1—a bill that legalizes abortion throughout all nine months of pregnancy in Ohio—was passed with overwhelming support. This marks one of several defeats for the pro-life movement in traditionally conservative states.

For the last half-century, the pro-life movement in the United States has been focused on fighting legal battles. While the movement filed court cases from sea to shining sea, public support for pro-life policies slowly cratered, fueled by massive spending campaigns by Planned Parenthood, NARAL, and other pro-choice groups.

There's also a growing perception that the pro-life movement is closely aligned with the radical ***politics*** of the MAGA movement and has little commitment to children after birth. As a pro-life Democrat, I observe this trend with concern.

It's time for the pro-life [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) to make one thing clear—life begins at conception and doesn't end at birth. That message could moderate the more extreme positions within my party.

At present, [*Democratic Party*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democratic-party?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) leaders hesitate to concede any restrictions on abortion. However, survey data show that when Americans are asked about it, [*two-thirds support significant limits after the first three months of pregnancy.*](https://streaklinks.com/B1npdIIPTwvsWXeWjAc7KtJa/https%3A%2F%2Fwww.npr.org%2F2023%2F04%2F26%2F1171863775%2Fpoll-americans-want-abortion-restrictions-but-not-as-far-as-red-states-are-going) I think it's time to challenge the Democratic Party's leadership on this issue and call them on their bluff.

What's the best way for Republicans to begin doing this? Extend the Child Tax Credit as a proud cornerstone of the American pro-life movement.

Because that's precisely what it is.

*Kristen Day is the Executive Director of Democrats For Life of America.*

*The views expressed in this article are the writer's own.*

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2345455/child-tax-credit-banner.jpg)

**Graphic**

Child tax credit banner

Larry French/Getty Images

WASHINGTON, DC - SEPTEMBER 20: Parents and caregivers with the Economic Security Project gather outside the White House to advocate for the Child Tax Credit in advance of the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health on September 20, 2022 in Washington, DC.

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