Champions fight for CTC, children's agenda

The Senate returns to Washington on Monday, but Champions for Children aren’t wasting any time. Democratic Sens. Michael Bennet (Colo.), Sherrod Brown (Ohio), Cory Booker (N.J.) Raphael Warnock (Ga. — Champion-in-waiting?) and Ron Wyden (Ore.) urged President Biden this week to make the improved Child Tax Credit “a centerpiece” of any deal on Build Back Better.

The politics of this legislation are an hour-to-hour kind of story, but one element never changes: The CTC kept 4 million children out of poverty every month and helped American kids and families pay for items including food, clothing, child care, etc.

- First Focus on Children’s Cara Baldari told NBC this week that the CTC is not “a private family issue” but something that affects us all. She noted that First Focus on Children has urged the Administration to create a child poverty target by executive order, establish an interagency coordinating council for children, track federal investment in children with a Children’s Budget and take other actions on behalf of children.
Immigration

Public charge and SNAP

The Biden Administration this week clarified that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly known as food stamps, is not subject to the public charge rule, and urged states to ensure that immigrant families realize they can access the program without fear. First Focus on Children asked the Administration over the summer to take this important step.

The Trump Administration wielded the public charge rule as a bludgeon against immigrant children and families, frightening them away from public benefit programs to which they are entitled. In Texas alone, SNAP saw a 13.5% reduction in enrollment between December 2017 and April 2019.
Family separation and what we can do about it

First Focus on Children this week answered a call for comments on **ending and preventing family separation at the U.S. border** with the following recommendations:

- Pursue **redress and accountability** for separated families
- Issue guidance based on the **right to family unity and due process**
- Eliminate all other **deterrence-based policies** that result in family separation
- Deploy standards, processes, and entities governed by a “**best interests of the child**” standard.

**More than 5,500 children were separated** from their families between 2017 and 2020. Even now, **thousands** of children remain separated. **Find the full comment on our website.**

**EYES PEELED:** On Monday, January 31, First Focus on Children will join Moms Rising, Care Can’t Wait and more than 250 other organizations in a New York Times open letter urging U.S. Senators to keep fighting for sweeping improvements to child care and pre-K, paid family and medical leave, home- and community-based services, and the Child Tax Credit.

**A tactic to use with ornery Senators?**
Cat steals ball right under nose of dog. 🐱ボールrawid AUD 🐶

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