

Trump's Budget Lays Out His Blueprint for Women and Families—And It's Terrifying

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President Trump is cutting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. He is taking food away from kids in the school lunch line, erecting barriers to affordable housing, and rolling back health and safety protections for women and children. And he's doing all these things to pay for the budget-busting tax cuts he enacted for millionaires and corporations.

The administration released its FY2021 budget proposal, presenting a unique opportunity to look at the President's priorities and values in one place. And while it's not surprising, it's important to note: **this budget is bad news for women and their families.**

Our new analysis tallies the cuts that Trump proposes in FY2021 to major programs that mostly serve women and families. We found that *\$114 billion of cuts*—ranging from health care to nutrition to education—would take place in the first year, alone.¹ For context, **literally ONE provision of the Trump tax scam that slashes corporate tax rates for wealthy companies will cost more this year than the entire cost of the \$114 billion in cuts to women and families we calculated.**²

Some might assume this budget is dead on arrival because a divided Congress is unlikely to enact Trump's proposals, especially this year. But the vision laid out in the budget is critical because it reinforces unilateral executive actions that harm women and their families and lays out a vision for legislative actions.

So pay attention. Here are 7 ways President Trump's budget is a disaster for women and their families:

- 1. It gives the rich more tax cuts.** Trump's budget continues lopsided tax cuts he signed into law in 2017—which benefit wealthy individuals and corporations—and proposes making individual tax cuts permanent. According to analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities,³ this policy would widen income and racial inequality by increasing after-tax incomes of the richest households by \$40,190—more than the annual income of a child care worker. Our analysis of the 2017 tax law⁴ shows why these policies are harmful for women—especially Black and brown women, who are most likely to struggle to make ends meet.

2. It cuts basic supports for women and the families who depend on them.

Trump pays for his tax cuts on the backs of low-income women. Trump's budget enshrines unilateral attacks on struggling families, including cuts to nutrition assistance,⁵ Social Security disability benefits,⁶ affordable housing,⁷ and redefining the federal poverty threshold⁸ to make more families ineligible for basic supports like Head Start and SNAP. It proposes additional cuts to programs helping families meet basic needs, including expanding draconian time limits on SNAP, and eliminating supports such as energy assistance for low-income families and legal services. A stubborn gender pay gap, workplace discrimination and harassment, and unpaid caregiving responsibilities leave women more likely to face economic insecurity and to depend on the exact services that Trump's budget slashes.

3. It reduces access to health care. The budget undermines our nation's health and health care. Instead of modernizing Medicaid, it "saves" by instituting drastic cuts to funding and eligibility. The budget takes health care from people who cannot meet stringent work reporting requirements or afford to pay premiums and co-pays. It also touts unnamed reforms, which could include expanding the sale of insurance plans that discriminate against women and are not required to protect pre-existing conditions. The Affordable Care Act and Medicaid provide critical coverage to women across the country and improves health and economic wellbeing. The administration should propose expansions and improvements of these critical health coverage programs, not ways to further restrict them. Such restrictions can have a disastrous impact.⁹

4. It puts personal beliefs before patients' needs. The budget includes the Hyde Amendment, which denies abortion coverage to individuals enrolled in Medicaid. It also includes the Weldon Amendment, which allows health care entities and staff to refuse patients' abortion care and interferes with state efforts to protect abortion access. The budget funds a division of the Office for Civil Rights¹⁰ that emboldens health care providers and institutions to use personal beliefs as grounds for discrimination against patients.

5. It undermines workplace protections for women and proposes "paid leave" that ignores the needs of millions of working women and their families. Trump's budget slashes funding for the Department of Labor (DOL)—including a 75 percent cut to the DOL Women's Bureau¹¹—and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. This would decrease each agency's ability

to ensure that women can work with equality, safety, and dignity. The budget also cuts training programs that can help women secure better quality, high-paying jobs. The inadequate parental leave proposal—like other sham proposals the administration has embraced¹²—excludes many people who need paid leave, like those battling critical health conditions or caring for family members.

6. It fails to make necessary investments for families to find and afford high-quality child care and promotes policies that compromise children's health and safety. The budget stifles federal child care funding at a time when only 1 in 6 eligible children receives it. This would mean fewer children and families served, and states would be unable to continue improving quality, supporting child care providers and workers, and implementing important reforms required by the 2014 bipartisan reauthorizations. The budget's dangerous supply proposal would create a race to the bottom—with states receiving temporary funding in exchange for permanent rollbacks of basic health and safety protections for children.¹³

7. It cuts educational opportunities for low- and middle-income students. The budget would eliminate more than \$69 billion in programs to help students afford college. This includes cutting the amount of federal work-study available by more than half, eliminating or setting caps on federal student loans, and restricting loan repayment options that allow students to manage their debt or have loans forgiven. At the K-12 level, Trump's budget would eliminate or consolidate programs meant to increase opportunities for students—resulting in more than \$5 billion in cuts to elementary and secondary programs. Though Trump's State of the Union address claimed to increase investments in career and technical education, less than \$1 billion is proposed in the budget—not nearly enough to make up in cuts to other programs. This budget sends the message loud and clear: unless you are immensely rich or wealthy, you do not deserve access to educational options that are high-quality, affordable, or help prepare you for college or an economically secure future.

There's no way around it. A budget is a statement of values. Trump's budget pays for his tax cuts and benefits the wealthiest people on the backs of women and families of color. This budget will only widen already existing wealth gaps. It vehemently chooses to protect the wellbeing of the wealthiest people over the poor. And those are not values we hold.

Methodology. Cuts to programs serving women and families: NWLC calculations based on Office of Management and Budget, “A Budget for America’s Future – President’s Budget FY 2021,” Supplemental Materials, Outlays, available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/>. 163 programs within the Department of Agriculture, Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Labor were cut in the president’s budget between FY 2020 and 2021. 25 of those programs disproportionately served women and families, totaling \$114.6 billion in cuts between FY 2020 and 2021. Cutting the corporate tax rate: Joint Committee on Taxation, “Estimated Budget Effects of the Conference Agreement for HR 1, the “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act,” available at <https://www.jct.gov/publications.html?func=startdown&id=5053>. Reducing the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent is estimated to cut corporate tax revenue by \$131.1 billion in 2021.

- 1 Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr. calculations based on Office of Management and Budget, *A Budget for America’s Future – President’s Budget FY 2021*, Supplemental Materials, Outlays, available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2020). Across the Departments of Agriculture, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Labor, 163 programs were cut in the president’s budget between FY 2020 and 2021. Twenty-five of those programs disproportionately served women and families, totaling \$114.6 billion in cuts between FY 2020 and 2021.
- 2 Reducing the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent is estimated to cut corporate tax revenue by \$131.1 billion in 2021. Joint Comm. on Tax’n, *Estimated Budget Effects of the Conference Agreement for HR 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act*, (Dec. 18, 2017), <https://www.jct.gov/publications.html?func=startdown&id=5053>.
- 3 Joel Friedman et al., Ctr. on Budget & Pol’y Priorities, *Five Things to Look for in the President’s 2020 Budget* (Feb. 7, 2020), <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/five-things-to-look-for-in-the-presidents-2021-budget>.
- 4 Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., *Two Years Later: The Impact of the 2017 Tax Law on Women and Families* (Dec. 2019), <https://nwlc.org/resources/two-years-later-the-impact-of-the-2017-tax-law-on-women-families/>.
- 5 See, e.g., Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., Comment Letter on Proposed Rule on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Requirements for Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (Apr. 2, 2019), available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/nwlc-comments-to-the-u-s-department-of-agriculture-on-snap/>; Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., Comment Letter on Proposed Rule on Revision of Categorical Eligibility in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Sep. 23, 2019), available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/nwlc-comments-to-the-u-s-department-of-agriculture-on-snap-categorical-eligibility/>; Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., Comment Letter on Proposed Rule Making Regarding Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Standardization of State Heating and Cooling Standard Utility Allowances (Dec. 2, 2019), available at <https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/NWLC-Comment-on-SNAP-Standard-Utility-Allowance-Proposed-Rule-FNS-2019-0009.pdf>.
- 6 Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., Comment Letter on the Proposed Rule on Rules Regarding the Frequency and Notice of Continuing Disability Reviews (Jan. 31, 2020), available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/nwlc-comments-to-the-social-security-administration-on-continuing-disability-reviews/>.
- 7 See, e.g., Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., Comment Letter on the Proposed Rule on Housing and Community Development Act of 1980: Verification of Eligible Status (July 9, 2019), available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/nwlc-comment-opposing-hud-proposed-rule-to-separate-families-or-take-away-housing-assistance/>.
- 8 Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., Comment Letter on Request for Comment on Consumer Inflation Measures Produced by Federal Statistical Agencies (June 21, 2019), available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/nwlc-comments-opposing-slower-inflation-measure-for-the-official-poverty-measure/>.
- 9 Bryce Covert, *How Does Losing Medicaid Help You Get A Job?*, *The Nation*, (Mar. 7, 2019), <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/arkansas-medicaid-work-requirement-healthcare/>.
- 10 Noel Leon, Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., *HHS’ Office for Civil Rights Created a New Office for Discrimination – and We Demand They Explain Just What Exactly They Think They’re Doing* (Jan. 25, 2018), <https://nwlc.org/blog/hhs-office-for-civil-rights-created-a-new-office-for-discrimination-and-we-demand-they-explain-just-what-exactly-they-think-theyre-doing/>.
- 11 U.S. Dep’t of Labor, *FY 2021 Budget in Brief* (Feb. 10, 2020), <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/general/budget/2021/FY2021BIB.pdf>.
- 12 Laura Narefsky, Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., *Working Families Need Paid Leave, Not a Loan* (Dec. 5, 2019), <https://nwlc.org/blog/working-families-need-paid-leave-not-a-loan/>.
- 13 Catherine White, Nat’l Women’s Law Ctr., *Don’t Look to the Trump Budget for Child Care Help—You Won’t Find It* (Mar. 11, 2019), <https://nwlc.org/blog/dont-look-to-the-trump-budget-for-child-care-help-you-wont-find-it/>.