

May 19, 2023

Dear Leader Schumer and Leader Jeffries,

We the undersigned organizations dedicated to promoting gender equity and working to ensure all women, LGBTQI+ people and their families can live a life of dignity, write to express **our gratitude for your strong opposition to any debt ceiling deal that increases poverty and raises costs for families.**

As you know, millions of women, LGBTQI+ people, people with disabilities and their families rely on Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), in addition to non-defense discretionary programs, in order to access health care, put food on the table, afford child care, pay their rent, and live in their communities. Cuts to these programs or [additional harsh](#) punitive requirements will make people poorer, sicker and hungrier, while doing [nothing](#) to promote employment.

As talks on raising the debt limit progress, we urge you to stand firm in rejecting these cuts. **Women would be disproportionately hurt by both these overall cuts and by losing access to benefits caused by burdensome reporting requirements.** [Analysis](#) by the National Women's Law Center shows that:

- Women are the [majority of adult Medicaid users](#), which [covers services](#) including birth control, maternity care, prescription drugs, home and community based services, and more that address many of women's major health needs throughout their lives.
- Women are 63% of adult SNAP users, and 92% of the SNAP-using households with children headed by a single adult.
- Women are 85% of the adults served by TANF.
- A full 75% of the households receiving rental assistance are [headed by women](#), as are two-thirds of the recipients of emergency rental assistance.
- Women disproportionately take on care responsibilities, so taking away child care [hurts their ability](#) to stay employed.
- And 62% of those pregnant, post-partum, and breastfeeding women receiving nutrition assistance through WIC are women of color.

We applaud your stance on passing a clean debt ceiling increase in recognition that women and the families who rely on us are not political leverage for a manufactured crisis. As discussions continue, we urge you to hold firm to President Biden's negotiating principle thus far: namely that Congress must raise the debt ceiling to avoid catastrophic, widespread consequences, and **do so without any cuts that increase poverty and take healthcare and food away from struggling families.**

There is a path forward that values our families and communities - and we urge you at every opportunity to remind the American people that rather than gutting supports our families rely on, we must invest in Medicaid so that no matter your zip code or how old you are, you have access to high quality affordable health care; we must invest in SNAP so that more families aren't

staring down hunger amidst rising food costs; we must ensure that more families have the income they need to provide the basics for themselves and their children. We must invest in child care, paid leave, and home and community based services, so that our families can balance work and caring for our loved ones. **And we can afford to do these things by asking the wealthy and corporations to pay their fair share in taxes.**

We appreciate your support and urge you to remain steadfast in protecting Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, as well as non-defense discretionary and entitlement programs so that low-income women and families do not pay the price for political brinkmanship and decades of lopsided tax cuts for billionaires and corporations.

Sincerely,

1000 Women Strong
A Better Balance
AIDS Alabama
All Our Kin
American Association of People with Disabilities
Americans for Tax Fairness
American Medical Students Association (AMSA)
Asset Building Strategies
Be a Hero
CA LGBTQ Health and Human Services Network
California NOW
Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy
Catholics for Choice
Care in Action
Caring Across Generations
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Popular Democracy
Chicago Foundation for Women
Child Care for Every Family Network
Children's Defense Fund
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Coalition on Human Needs
Columbia NOW - National Organization for Women, Columbia, SC
Community Catalyst
Community Change Action
Equal Rights Advocates
ERA Coalition
Family Values @ Work
Florida NOW Education Fund
Food Research & Action Center

Futures Without Violence
GRACE/End Child Poverty California
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
Illinois National Organization for Women
Just Solutions
Justice in Aging
Main Street Alliance
Maryland National Organization for Women
Minority Veterans of America
MomsRising
Montgomery County PA NOW
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation - Black Women's Roundtable
National Council of Jewish Women
National Crittenton
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Health Law Program
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Organization for Women (NOW) CT
National Organization for Women
National Organization for Women, Columbia Area
National Organization for Women, Hollywood NOW Chapter
National Organization for Women, Missouri
National Organization for Women, South Dakota Chapter
National Organization of API Ending Sexual Violence
National Organization of Women - Minnesota NOW
National Partnership for Women & Families
National WIC Association
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
National Women's Political Caucus
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Northern New Jersey NOW
NOW New York State
Ohio National Organization for Women
Oxfam America
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Pinellas County National Organization for Women
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Poverty Project at the Institute for Policy Studies
Prosperity Now
Rochester NY Chapter of National Organization for Women

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

Supermajority

The Collaborative

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

The National Domestic Violence Hotline

Ultraviolet Action

Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice

United Church of Christ Justice and Local Church Ministries

USOW

Washington State Federation of Democratic Women

Women's Law Project