

Duckworth helps reintroduce legislation to expand earned income tax credits for working families

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) joined U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) this week in reintroducing legislation to support working families in Illinois and across the country by expanding two anti-poverty tax credits. The *Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2017* will expand eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to more Americans while making it easier to claim it, strengthen the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and also help ensure the federal tax system does not force hardworking Americans into poverty.

“Every American deserves the chance to get ahead, and commonsense legislation like the *Working Families Tax Relief Act* will help make that a reality,” said Duckworth. **“By making more Americans eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit and improving access to the EITC and Child Tax Credit for millions more, our legislation will give people a much-needed financial boost during tax season, helping them to support their families and strengthen our economy as a whole.”**

Earned Income Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits help low-income Americans lift themselves out of poverty. The EITC is a refundable tax credit for low-income working Americans and the CTC is available to Americans with children under age 17, providing a credit of \$1,000 per child. The CTC helped lift 1.6 million children out of poverty in 2015. In Illinois, there were 1,055,660 EITC recipients and 891,030 CTC recipients. `

The *Working Families Tax Relief Act* would do four things:

1. **Expand EITC for Workers Without Children:** Childless workers are most vulnerable to being taxed into poverty by the federal tax system. Workers not raising children in their home may receive a small credit, however, the maximum credit amounts to \$510 and completely phases out at \$15,010. Workers that do not claim children under 25 are ineligible for the EITC. To help solve this problem, the *Working Families Tax Relief Act* will reduce the EITC age limit to 21 and will expand the size of the refundable credit to \$913 for full-time, minimum wage workers not claiming children.
2. **Strengthen the Child Tax Credit:** The CTC already helps lift families with young children out of poverty, and this bill will help more families benefit from the CTC. This legislation will support the most vulnerable children by allowing taxpayers to claim 45 percent of each dollar earned up to a maximum credit of \$3,000 per-child under six.
3. **Index the CTC to Inflation:** The bill would ensure that the CTC keeps up with the costs of inflation.

4. **Make EITC Easier to Claim:** The bill clarifies who can claim a child, including simplified rules for separated parents. It also allows those living with a qualifying child to claim the childless EITC proposed in the bill if they do not already claim the child for the EITC.

Other sponsors of this bill include:

Dick Durbin (D-IL), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Pat Leahy (D-VT), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Patty Murray (D-WA), Jack Reed (D-RI), Bill Nelson (D-FL), Tom Carper (D-DE), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Bob Casey (D-PA), Claire McCaskill (D-MO), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Jon Tester (D-MT), Tom Udall (D-NM), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Mark Warner (D-VA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Al Franken (D-MN), Chris Coons (D-DE), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Angus King (I-ME), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Ed Markey (D-MA), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Gary Peters (D-MI), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Kamala Harris (D-CA) and Catherine Cortez-Masto (D-NV).