



July 24, 2014

United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

We welcome pro-family proposals that would expand assistance to parents with children, and improve family formation and stability. We have concerns, however, with the extent to which HR 4935, the Child Tax Credit Improvement Act, would exclude some poor and vulnerable families from receiving this vital assistance.

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* points out that workers have a right to a family wage, “a wage sufficient to maintain a family and allow it to live decently. . . . There can be several different ways to make a family wage a concrete reality. Various forms of important social provisions help to bring it about, for example, family subsidies and other contributions for dependent family members. . . .” (no. 250). The Child Tax Credit (CTC) is a clear example of such a subsidy.

A provision of HR 4935 would deny the additional, refundable CTC to up to five million children--the large majority of whom are American citizens--of working immigrant families. This would hurt vulnerable youth, would increase poverty and family instability, and would be detrimental to the common good.

Additionally, there are concerns that, because HR 4935 fails to extend the expansion made to the Child Tax Credit by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the value of the credit to poorer families will erode. Over time, more poor families will be ineligible to claim the credit at all. An antipoverty policy that fails to reach the poorest working families would be unfortunate, and such a flaw should be remedied.

Our organizations have long supported the Child Tax Credit because it is pro-work, pro-family, and one of the most effective antipoverty programs in our nation. As a result of the increasing prevalence of low-wage work in our economy, wage subsidies provided by the government, through vehicles such as the Child Tax Credit, for millions of families are the difference between working in poverty and achieving basic financial security. Excluding children of hardworking immigrant families from receiving this assistance is unjust and wrong. We ask you to support policies that expand effective antipoverty programs to vulnerable populations, rather than excluding them.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski  
Chairman  
Committee on Domestic Justice  
and Human Development

Most Reverend Eusebio L. Elizondo  
Chairman  
Committee on Migration

Reverend Larry Snyder  
President  
Catholic Charities USA