

How Your Members' Votes Affect Children

Key Senate 2010 Children's Votes

1. Health Care and Education Reconciliation

HR 4872, Senate Vote 105; Passed 56-43 on 3/25/2010

Status: Became Public Law 111-152 on 3/30/2010

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This bill makes important changes for children to the comprehensive health reform bill passed by the Senate late in 2009. It also makes several improvements in the structure of student loans and federal financial aid to make higher education more affordable for many students. Final passage and enactment of this bill and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act guarantees access to health coverage for 32 million people in America, including more than 95 percent of all children.

2. Unemployment Benefits Extension

HR 4213, Senate Vote 215; Motion agreed to 59-39 on 7/21/2010

Status: Became Public Law 111-205 on 7/22/2010

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This bill helped children in families suffering from the recession by extending unemployment benefits to the end of November 2010 after the unemployment insurance program had expired more than six weeks earlier. It allowed the long-term unemployed who exhaust their state jobless benefits, typically available for 26 weeks, to receive up to an additional 73 weeks of federal benefits, and many unemployed persons received their benefits retroactively. Unfortunately other relief components for children, families and individuals were stripped from the bill.

3. Medicaid and Education Assistance

HR 1586, Senate Vote 228; Motion agreed to 61-39 on 8/5/2010

Status: Became Public Law 111-226 on 8/10/2010

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This bill provides \$16.1 billion to extend for six months the increased federal reimbursement rate for Medicaid in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and \$10 billion to pay for an estimated 161,000 educators' jobs. However, it was one of several bills this session that asked those voting to rob Peter to pay Paul. While the health care and education increases offered important help to children and to budget-strapped states, it was unfortunate that their cost was offset in part by an \$11.9 billion cut in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits that were to take effect in 2013. Senators were told by the Senate Majority Leader the SNAP cuts would be restored before they took effect.

4. Gender-Based Wage Discrimination

S 3772, Senate Vote 249; Cloture motion rejected 58-41 on 11/17/2010

Status: Failed to Proceed to Final Passage

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. More than three-fourths of mothers of school-age children and more than two-thirds of mothers of children under age six work are in the labor force. This bill, passed by the House in January 2009, would have provided women legal protections against pay discrimination by requiring employers to show that pay disparity is job and not gender-related. It did not even get debated in the Senate.

5. Middle Class Tax Relief

HR 4853, Senate Vote 258; Cloture rejected 53-36 on 12/4/2010

Status: Amendment Failed

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This amendment would have extended expiring tax cuts in households with income below \$250,000 a year and extended unemployment insurance through the end of 2012. For higher income households, it would have provided a tax reduction for their first \$250,000 of income, but not continued a tax break for income above that point. This vote on tax relief was a much friendlier vote for children and low income families than the final tax relief package passed by the Senate on December 15.

6. Extension of Tax Cuts for the Wealthy

HR 4853, Senate Vote 276; Motion agreed to 81-19 on 12/15/2010

Status: Became Public Law No. 111-312 on 12/17/2010

CDF Action Council Position: No. This bill extends for two years President Bush's 2001 and 2003 income tax cuts for all taxpayers, including the wealthiest two percent of taxpayers. The bill also extends the Alternative Minimum Tax and expands the Estate Tax so only the very wealthiest families benefit. In exchange, the bill extends unemployment insurance through 2012 and the increases established in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit and fiscal relief for college students. The billions of dollars in tax relief for the wealthiest Americans add enormous pressure to cut safety net programs to the detriment of low-income children and families.

7. Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act

HR 5281, Senate Vote 278; Motion rejected 55-41 on 12/18/2010

Status: Failed to Pass

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This amendment would have provided certain immigrant students who grew up in the U.S. secure legal status if they attend college or serve in the U.S. military. Many of them have been living in the United States since their childhood but are denied the opportunity to fully contribute to our country after they graduate from high school due to their undocumented status.

8. The Taxpayer Protection Pledge (the "Pledge")

CDF Action Council Position: No. The pledge promoted by Americans for Tax Reform is a commitment to taxpayers and to the American people that a member will oppose: 1) any and all efforts to increase the marginal income tax rate for individuals and businesses; and 2) any net reduction or elimination of deductions and credits, unless matched dollar for dollar by further reducing tax rates. CDF believes that those who commit to this no-new-taxes pledge are putting the future of millions of our children in jeopardy and has scored such a commitment as a "no" vote for children.

Key House of Representatives 2010 Children's Votes

1. Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

HR 3590, House Vote 165; Motion agreed to 219-212 on 3/21/2010

Status: Became Public Law 111-148 on 3/23/2010

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This landmark health care reform legislation guarantees access to health coverage for 32 million people in America, including more than 95 percent of all children. With the passage of this bill and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, Congress and the president took a major step toward ensuring comprehensive and affordable health coverage for all children and families in America.

2. Health Care and Education Reconciliation

HR 4872, House Vote 194; Motion agreed to 220-207 on 3/25/2010

Status: Became Public Law 111-152 on 3/30/2010

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This bill makes important changes for children to the comprehensive health reform bill passed by the Senate late in 2009. It also makes several improvements in the structure of student loans and federal financial aid to make higher education more affordable for many students. Final passage and enactment of this bill and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act guarantees access to health coverage for 32 million people in America, including more than 95 percent of all children.

3. Unemployment Benefits Extension

HR 4213, House Vote 463; Motion agreed to 272-152 on 7/22/2010

Status: Became Public Vote 111-205 on 7/22/2010

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This bill helped children in families suffering from the recession by extending unemployment benefits to the end of November 2010 after the unemployment insurance program had expired more than six weeks earlier. It allowed the long-term unemployed who exhaust their state jobless benefits, typically available for 26 weeks, to receive up to an additional 73 weeks of federal benefits, and many unemployed persons received their benefits retroactively. Unfortunately other relief components for children, families and individuals were stripped from the bill.

4. Medicaid and Education Assistance

HR 1586, House Vote 518; Motion agreed to 247-161 on 8/10/2010

Status: Became Public Law 111-226 on 8/10/2010

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. This bill provides \$16.1 billion to extend for six months the increased federal reimbursement rate for Medicaid in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and \$10 billion to pay for an estimated 161,000 educators' jobs. However, it was one of several bills this session that asked those voting to rob Peter to pay Paul. While the health care and education increases offered important help to children and to budget-strapped states, it was unfortunate that their cost was offset in part by \$11.9 billion in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits that were to take effect in 2013. As passage was debated, Congressional leaders committed to work to restore SNAP benefit levels before cuts took effect.

5. Child Nutrition

S 3307, House Vote 603; Passed 264-157 on 12/2/2010

Status: Became Public Law 111-178 on 12/13/2010

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 reauthorized through 2015 child nutrition programs that provide nutritious meals and snacks to millions of children, especially those in low-income families. It provides significant new investments for better child nutrition through more afterschool meals, higher reimbursements for school lunch providers, improved administration of WIC, and improvements in the nutritional quality of school meals and meals in child care program. However, it was one of several bills this session that asked those voting to rob Peter to pay Paul. While the child nutrition bill included significant new investments, it was unfortunate that their cost was offset in part by cuts in SNAP benefits that were to take effect in 2013. Final passage was accompanied by a commitment by the President and Congressional leaders to fix the cut in SNAP benefits before they took effect.

6. Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act

HR 5281, House Vote 625; Passed 216-198 on 12/8/2010

Status: Failed to Pass in Senate

CDF Action Council Position: Yes. The DREAM Act was added as an amendment to H.R. 5281, the Removal Clarification Act of 2010, and would have provided certain immigrant students who grew up in the United States secure legal status if they attend college or serve in the U.S. military. Many of these young immigrants have been living in the United States since their childhood but are denied the opportunity to fully contribute to our country after they graduate from high school due to their undocumented status.

7. Extension of Tax Cuts for the Wealthy

HR 4853, House Vote 647; Motion agreed to 277-148 on 12/16/2010

Status: Became Public Law No. 111-312 on 12/17/2010

CDF Action Council Position: No. This bill extends for two years President Bush's 2001 and 2003 income tax cuts for all taxpayers, including the wealthiest two percent of taxpayers. The bill also extends the Alternative Minimum Tax and expands the Estate Tax so only the very wealthiest families benefit. In exchange, the bill extends unemployment insurance through 2012 and the increases established in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit and fiscal relief for college students. The billions of dollars in tax relief for the wealthiest Americans add enormous pressure to cut safety net programs to the detriment of low-income children and families.

8. The Taxpayer Protection Pledge (the "Pledge")

CDF Action Council Position: No. The pledge promoted by Americans for Tax Reform, is a commitment to taxpayers and to the American people that a Member will oppose: 1) any and all efforts to increase the marginal income tax rate for individuals and businesses; and 2) any net reduction or elimination of deductions and credits, unless matched dollar for dollar by further reducing tax rates. CDF believes that those who commit to this no-new-taxes pledge are putting the future of millions of our children in jeopardy and has scored such a commitment as a "no" vote for children.