

National Hispanic Leadership Agenda

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

March 16, 2016

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: NHLA Opposition to H.R. 4722, to require inclusion of the taxpayer's social security number to claim the refundable portion of the child tax credit.

Dear Representative:

We write on behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of 40 leading national Latino nonpartisan civil rights and advocacy organizations in opposition to H.R. 4722, a bill that would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require inclusion of the taxpayer's social security number to claim the refundable portion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC). This legislation would deny the CTC, a critical and proven anti-poverty tool, to individuals filing taxes with an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN). If enacted, this legislation would cause harm to Latino families and children by increasing their household tax burden and making it more difficult for them to meet their basic needs.

Despite our economy's progress in recent years, the economic outlook for many working families remains challenging. As of 2012, more than one third (34 percent) of Latino children lived in poverty and Latino children constitute 37 percent of all children living with hunger. The CTC is a proven anti-poverty measure that Congress established to help working families, including many Latino families, financially care for their children. In 2013, the CTC lifted approximately 3.1 million people out of poverty, including about 1.7 million children, and lessened poverty for another 13.7 million people, including 6.8 million children. The CTC is only available for taxpayers who are working, earning income, and raising children.

This tax credit is legally available for qualified taxpayers who use an ITIN. H.R. 4722 and similar legislation would eliminate the CTC for hardworking, taxpaying parents who file tax returns using an ITIN. ITINs are commonly provided by the IRS to individuals who apply for them in order to pay their taxes and who are not eligible to obtain a Social Security number. These taxpayers include lawfully present individuals, such as certain survivors of domestic violence, Cuban and Haitian entrants, spouses and children of individuals with employment visas, as well as undocumented immigrants. Tax filers who receive an ITIN from the IRS do so because they meet the qualification criteria, so it is therefore false to claim that requiring the use of social security numbers in lieu of ITINs will prevent fraud.

H.R. 4722 would disproportionately harm Latinos; an estimated 85 percent of working families who would be affected by this proposal are Hispanic. In fact, an estimated 4 million U.S. citizen children in mixed-status families could lose access to the CTC. Congress originally passed the CTC to ensure that US citizen children, no matter the legal status of their parents, would never face the specter of poverty and hunger. H.R. 4722 would undo that promise and condemn millions of Latino U.S. citizen children to poverty. This unjustified disparate impact on Latino families is inconsistent with the federal government's 50-year old policy of non-discrimination in federally-assisted programs at the state and local level.

Alianza Americas
American G.I. Forum
ASPIRA Association
Avance Inc.
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
Cuban American National Council
Farmworker Justice
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities
Hispanic Federation
Hispanic National Bar Association
Inter-University Program for Latino Research
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
Latino Justice PRLDEF
League of United Latin American Citizens
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives
National Association of Hispanic Publications
NALEO Educational Fund
National Association of Latino Independent Producers
National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc.
National Council of La Raza
National Hispana Leadership Institute
National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Hispanic Environmental Council
National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Institute for Latino Policy
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Puerto Rican Coalition
Presente.org
SER Jobs for Progress National
Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce
U.S.- Mexico Foundation

H.R. 4722, therefore, would undercut the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and weaken our national commitment to its principles. In light of the above grounds, NHLA strongly urges you to join in opposition against H.R. 4722.

For additional information, please do not hesitate to contact NHLA through Albert Jacquez of NCLR, at (202) 785-1670 or ajacquez@nclr.org.

Sincerely,



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Jose Calderón

President, Hispanic Federation
Co-Chair, NHLA Immigration
Committee