

Providing For Life Act

This pro-family package combines new and existing Rubio proposals to provide comprehensive support for pregnant and new moms, as well as young children.

Child Tax Credit Expansion.

Rubio and Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) led the charge to double the Child Tax Credit (CTC) in 2017. In this legislation, Rubio again calls for a significant expansion of the CTC to allow parents to keep more of their hard-earned money to cover the costs of raising children. Under the newly expanded CTC:

- Parents would receive a credit of up to \$3,500 per child under the age of 18, and up to \$4,500 per child for children under the age of 6;
- The expanded CTC would maintain current phase-out thresholds of \$200,000 for single filers and \$400,000 for joint filers;
- The refundable portion of the credit would be amended to phase in at a rate of 15.3 percent, beginning with the first dollar of income earned, to reflect combined employee and employer payroll tax liability;
- Parents could now claim the credit for their unborn children. If the child is born early in the year, prior to a parent filing taxes, the parent would be able to include the child in that year's tax filing. If the child is born later in the year, the credit that a parent would have received for an early-in-the-year birth could be applied to the taxable year in which the child was born; and
- The state and local tax (SALT) deduction for individuals, capped under current law, would be permanently eliminated to help offset the cost of the expanded credit.

Expanded Tax Relief for Adoptive Parents.

There are approximately 117,000 children and youth waiting to be adopted in the U.S. In 2020 alone, 20,000 youth aged out of the child welfare system without a permanent family. Because the adoption tax credit is currently nonrefundable, many low-income and working-class families do not benefit from the credit much or at all if they wish to adopt—limiting their ability to offset the costs of an adoption. This provision would make the adoption tax credit fully refundable, helping more children to find loving homes.

New Parents Act.

Today, too many young, working families are falling behind. Paid parental leave allows working parents to take time off to care for their newborns or recently adopted children, which could contribute to children's development as well as family health and financial security. This legislation includes Rubio's [New Parents Act](#), a bill that would allow new and newly-adoptive parents to pull forward up to three months of their Social Security benefits to finance paid parental leave. Stay-at-home parents with a sufficient earnings history would also be able to take the funding option and receive resources.

Supporting Moms and Children through Child Support Reform.

Child Support Enforcement (CSE) programs provide critical support for low-income moms. The U.S. Census has estimated that CSE lifted close to 1 million people out of poverty in 2017 alone. Federal law already requires individuals enrolled in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and Medicaid to cooperate with the state in establishing child support orders, but many participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are not required to do so. At the same time, the TANF caseload has declined considerably in the past two decades, while the SNAP rolls have increased. Recent U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) data suggests that there are nearly 2.8 million custodial parents, and 1.9 million non-custodial parents (NCPs), eligible for the SNAP program but without formal child support orders established, resulting in millions of mothers missing out on important benefits. This legislation would amend federal law to also require SNAP recipients to cooperate with states in establishing child support orders, subject to exceptions for custodial parents for whom doing so would not be in their best interest or that of their children.

Workforce Training for Non-Custodial Parents.

This bill would reallocate \$100,000,000 of existing spending to provide grants to states to conduct evidence-based workforce training projects for qualified non-custodial parents (NCPs) that are behind on their child support payments, ensuring that NCPs have a pathway toward compliance and more mothers and children receive needed resources. States would be required to prioritize services for low-income NCPs.

Child Support to Cover Pregnancy Costs.

Even for those mothers that ultimately pursue child support orders, many are left to cover out-of-pocket medical expenses on their own. The bill includes provisions to incentivize states to require, upon the mother's request, that the biological father of a child pay at least half of a mother's reasonable out-of-pocket medical costs incurred during pregnancy, including health insurance premiums and other cost-sharing.

Pregnant Students' Rights Act.

The legislation includes Rubio's Pregnant Students' Rights Act, originally introduced by Rep. Ashley Hinson. A 2019 CDC report found that 27.6 percent of abortions in the United States were performed on women of college age. Despite protections granted by law, many pregnant students attending an institution of higher education may feel pressured to end their pregnancy due to fears of risking their academic standing or athletic scholarship. Women should never have to choose between carrying their baby to full term or their academic success. Instead, they should feel supported by their school to create the most ideal future for themselves and their child. The [Pregnant Students' Rights Act](#), which aims to protect the rights of pregnant students by strengthening existing requirements for higher education institutions to publicly disclose the rights and resources available to pregnant and parenting students, such as excused absences or modified class schedules. Schools will be required to inform students of their rights and protections other than abortion services such as specific information dissemination through student handbooks, student orientation curriculum, the institutions' website, among others. Additionally, the legislation would require schools to inform students about the procedures to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if there is a Title IX violation against a pregnant or parenting student.

Community Mentors for Moms Act.

Research consistently highlights the powerful impacts of case management and mentoring, and the presence of friendship and community connections with people outside of one's socioeconomic circle is one of the main predictors of upward mobility. The legislation promotes these vital connections by including Rubio's Community Mentors for Moms Act, which would establish a new competitive grant program to fund innovative community-based mentoring initiatives for pregnant moms and mothers with young children. Eligible grant recipients include local governments and nonprofits with a history of serving mothers, including churches and other religious organizations. Grant recipients would be required provide a mentoring program for low-income mothers in their community to offer support and coaching designed to lead to improvements in maternal and child health, mothers' stress levels, parenting skills, financial literacy, and connections to other public and private resources and supports. Programs funded by mentoring grants would utilize community volunteer mentors and implement individualized needs assessments for program participants.

Lifting Local Communities Act.

Faith-based organizations contribute nearly \$1.2 trillion of socio-economic value to the United States economy, with billions directly benefiting low-income families. In many communities, these organizations form the backbone of the local safety net, protecting and providing for families and individuals who hit hard times or struggle to make ends meet. Federal policymakers have historically acknowledged the vital role of faith-based organizations in our nation's antipoverty and community development efforts and taken steps to ensure that they can apply for and administer federally-funded social services. The main rules governing this process, called "charitable choice" or "equal participation" rules, have been laid out via rulemaking, but often change from administration to administration. To provide certainty for religious organizations applying for federal programs and better serve Americans in need, the bill includes Senator Rubio's Lifting Local Communities Act, which would codify vital religious protections in the delivery of federal social service dollars across federal social service programs, ensuring that these protections are clearly stated and enshrined in federal law rather than subject to the back and forth of rulemaking. The bill would also take new steps to protect religious exercise and empower religious organizations to participate fully in federally-funded social services without fear of reprisal or burdensome restrictions on the basis of their beliefs.

Standing with Moms Act.

Though there are numerous resources available to support women facing an unexpected, unwanted, or complicated pregnancy, numerous women still choose abortion because they are unaware of these resources or struggled to find services close to them. The legislation includes Rubio's Standing with Moms Act, which would create a federal clearinghouse, known as life.gov, that would provide a comprehensive portal of pro-life federal, state, local, and private resources available during and after pregnancy. These could include federal and state assistance programs, federally-funded local health clinics, mentorship opportunities, material or legal support, childcare, adoption resources, and more. Each of these entities are life-affirming and do not have any connection to providing, promoting, or financially supporting abortions. The clearinghouse would also include access to Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal Mental Health hotline that would provide immediate mental health support for women and assist them with finding local resources on the clearinghouse.

WIC Reform.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides grants to states for supplemental foods, social service referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant and postpartum women, as well as infants and children up to the age of five. Research shows that WIC improves the lives of participating families and is cost-effective: one study found that it saves up to \$3.50 in future healthcare costs for every dollar spent. In FY21, 6.2 million women and children participated in the program. Rubio's legislation includes a number of reforms to the WIC program, including:

- Extending the postpartum benefit eligibility period for qualifying mothers from six months to two years;
- Extending the breastfeeding eligibility benefit period from one year to two years;
- Extending expanded cash-value voucher benefits providing fruits and vegetables to WIC recipients, adjusted for inflation;
- Requiring the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to update the supplemental foods review every five years, rather than the current 10 years, and to promulgate new regulations, as necessary, within 18 months of the completion of such review; and
- Requiring that state and local agencies provide to individuals applying for the program information about establishing child support orders and referral to such programs or agencies authorized to determine eligibility for child support.

Life-Affirming Healthcare for Mothers Act.

Pregnancy resource centers are critical in providing resources to support mothers with unexpected or difficult pregnancies. However, many of these organizations struggle to receive enough funding to provide the wide-breadth of resources necessary for new mothers, including counseling services, health care referrals or visits, and tangible goods for new babies. A major barrier for these groups to receive adequate federal support is the lack of dedicated funding and that there is no legal definition of a pregnancy resource center. As the need for more maternal health and child wellbeing services increases with the overturning of Roe, more women than ever will be benefitting from the resources of these organizations. This bill would permit pregnancy resource centers to be eligible for Title X funding and require the HHS Secretary to provide grants and other assistance to these organizations. Notably, these organizations will not be required to provide, refer, or counsel in favor of contraception to be eligible for funding under Title X. This bill would also codify a definition of a pregnancy resource center into law.