



July, 2011

Dear President Obama, Vice President Biden, House Speaker Boehner, Senate Majority Leader Reid, Senate Minority Leader McConnell and House Minority Leader Pelosi,

During the last several weeks, advocates for children and their families have watched the debt ceiling negotiations with growing concern. The outcome of these negotiations could have a significant, negative impact on our nation's most vulnerable children and families.

America's children and their families have been hit hard by the recession and the number of children living in poverty has grown at an alarming rate. If we want to prevent harm to our country's future, we must make children our first priority. Now is not the time to drastically cut investments in our future. Instead we must ensure that services to children, youth and their struggling families are sufficient to cover their needs. Please ensure that deficit reduction legislation does no harm to low-income families. And please make certain that it does not increase poverty or inequality.

The Children's Leadership Council (CLC) recognizes the potential danger to the country's economic stability posed by growing debt in the long term. However, we maintain that cutting spending on services for children, youth, and families as a means of addressing this problem is not only irresponsible, it is fiscally unsound. We ask that you take an approach to deficit reduction that protects low-income families and ensures adequate investment for their future. Eliminate egregious tax loopholes for corporations and millionaires. Prioritize the future of our nation's children. Investing in every child's opportunity to reach their fullest potential helps ensure our future economic success.

The CLC calls on each of you, our country's leaders, to stand up for a population that is counting on you and hoping you will keep their best interests in mind. The current debt ceiling negotiations are an opportunity to turn the tide for America's children and families. An approach to deficit reduction that includes significant revenues and prioritizes sensible, high impact investments in low-income children, parents and others will set the stage for smart economic growth, without further endangering the future of America's children.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned Members and Allies of the Children's Leadership Council