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May 20, 2025

**Vote NO on H. Con. Res. 14**

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 240 national civil and human rights advocacy organizations, we write to express our strong opposition to the House budget reconciliation bill, H. Con. Res. 14, which proposes cuts and investments that would significantly harm civil and human rights.

The House budget reconciliation bill prioritizes tax cuts favoring the wealthy while gutting vital services for everyday Americans. The reconciliation process is primarily being used to extend the 2017 tax cuts for the benefit of the wealthiest 1 percent in this country, while proposing deep cuts to essential programs and resources like Medicaid, SNAP, Planned Parenthood, and student financial aid on which that the majority of Americans rely. At the same time, the legislation allocates significant increases in spending for large-scale, anti-immigrant operations, including expanded detention facilities and deportation operations that will also disrupt the lives of families and communities. Additionally, the bill creates voucher schemes to subsidize private school tuition, thereby undermining the public schools 90 percent of children attend. Finally, the bill eliminates key safeguards that have protected millions from harm when engaging in the financial marketplace, when interacting with technology, and when seeking vindication of their rights.

By using reconciliation to do little more than prioritize tax breaks for the rich, Congress risks undermining the wellbeing and rights of millions in this country. Specifically, the House reconciliation bill:

**Makes the largest Medicaid cuts in history, which would eliminate a lifeline and critical care that benefits millions of Americans.** The massive cuts in the House reconciliation bill would devastate the health and financial security of millions of Americans, including children, seniors, people with disabilities, rural communities, and families. These historic cuts would disproportionately harm communities of color, nearly a third of whom rely on Medicaid for lifesaving care, including half of all children of color. Medicaid provides access to affordable medications and treatment, mental health services, and preventive care that help communities stay healthy. Slashing Medicaid to finance \$4.5 trillion in tax breaks for the ultra-wealthy and large corporations is not only fiscally irresponsible, it is morally indefensible. Medicaid is a cornerstone of access and equity in our healthcare system,

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covering a quarter of all Americans. Additionally, the bill makes cuts and changes to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that would make it more difficult for millions of low-income people to obtain Marketplace coverage. These harmful and unnecessary cuts to Medicaid and the ACA will threaten the health of people in every district and community across the country.

**Defunds Planned Parenthood, which would devastate access to essential health care for millions of people across the country.** Planned Parenthood health centers provide critical, often lifesaving services like cancer screenings, birth control, sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and treatment, and general wellness care. Planned Parenthood reaches people who face systemic barriers to care, including those in rural, low-income, and underserved communities. The majority of Planned Parenthood patients rely on Medicaid and other federal and state programs to access care. Cutting off funding would not only close health centers, leaving many of these patients with nowhere to turn for essential care, but would also deepen health disparities and overwhelm an already strained health care system. In fact, Planned Parenthood's role in preventative care reduces long term health care costs and helps people maintain their ability to work, care for families, and contribute to their communities. Even though Medicaid funds are not used for abortion other than in rare exceptions, Medicaid funding is being used to target Planned Parenthood health centers and block people who rely on Medicaid from getting care at these trusted health centers. The attack on Planned Parenthood is not about fiscal responsibility; it is about advancing an extreme agenda that harms communities across this nation.

**Imposes cruel, shortsighted, and unprecedented cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which would upend access to food for millions of low-income families, children, seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, rural communities, and people of color.** These cuts, also aimed at financing tax breaks for the wealthiest households and corporations, would gut a vital program that helps more than 40 million people and disproportionately impacts communities already facing economic hardship. SNAP improves overall health outcomes, bolsters local economies, and helps close the wealth gap. Whether through slashing benefits, restricting eligibility, or shifting costs to states, the result would be the same: more hunger, more hardship, and greater inequality. SNAP is one of the most effective anti-poverty tools we have, with nearly one in five children depending on it for daily nutrition. Any cuts to SNAP will jeopardize the ability of individuals and families to put food on their tables.

**Ignores the 17 million children who currently do not receive the full Child Tax Credit (CTC) because their parents' earnings are too low, and excludes 4.5 million citizen children from receiving the CTC because their parents are immigrants.** This legislation, which decimates programs and services that families rely on while giving tax handouts to corporations and billionaires, fails to expand the CTC to benefit kids whose families are struggling the most. Although the bill proposes a modest expansion of the CTC for families with moderate and high incomes, it does nothing to improve this vital tax credit for the 17 million children who are currently left out from receiving the full credit amount because their families' incomes are too low. Additionally, the bill strips the CTC from an additional 4.5 million children who are citizens or lawful permanent residents, but have an immigrant parent without a Social Security Number.

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**Weakens student borrower protections and cuts student financial aid and affordable repayment plans, which would cause deep and lasting harm to millions of students.** Our debt financed system of higher education has meant that for low-income and middle class students, access to higher education depends on access to affordable student loans with robust consumer protections, including the gainful employment rule, the borrower defense to repayment rule, the 90/10 threshold, and closed school discharge. Approximately 7 million students rely on Pell Grants each year to help afford college, and slashing this funding would force low- and middle-income students to shoulder even more of the cost or forgo higher education altogether. More than 12 million borrowers are currently enrolled in income-driven repayment plans, and eliminating or curtailing these plans would saddle them with unaffordable debt for decades. About 750,000 borrowers, including teachers, nurses, veterans, and other public servants, have already benefited from Public Service Loan Forgiveness, and millions more are working toward it in critical sectors that contribute essential services directly to rural, suburban, and urban communities across the country. Cutting student aid, weakening borrower protections, and eliminating aspects of federal student loan programs would not only undermine college access and affordability, it would weaken the broader economy by limiting educational opportunity and social mobility.

**Creates voucher schemes that undermine funding for public education to subsidize private school tuition.** Proposals such as the Educational Choice for Children Act (ECCA) provide tax breaks to wealthy filers in order to prop up private school voucher schemes, avoiding the accountability and nondiscrimination obligations that come with public funding. Not only do these schemes undermine funding for the public schools on which 90 percent of children rely, they redirect federal funding without providing the protections students are entitled to in public schools.

**Eliminates substantial funding for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), which would strip millions of Americans of essential protections in the financial marketplace.** Since its creation in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, the CFPB has ensured consumer rights and financial fairness. It has returned billions of dollars to consumers, and held financial institutions accountable for discriminatory and deceptive practices. It plays a crucial role in enforcing civil rights laws like the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, ensuring that communities of color, low-income families, and vulnerable populations are protected from predatory lending and financial discrimination. Eliminating its funding would dismantle a key safeguard against the kinds of abuses that led to an economic collapse, disproportionately harming those already at risk.

**Invests billions of dollars to create a mass deportation machine that threatens to trample on civil rights and civil liberties.** The administration has already used wartime authorities to lock up hundreds of people overseas without due process, and has planned to detain tens of thousands of immigrants at Guantanamo Bay and other military bases. It has revoked visas and locked up students purely on the basis of speech, in gross violation of the First Amendment. The administration wants to lock up countless more immigrants in facilities that are overcrowded and inhumane. At the same time, it wants to dramatically expand ICE's digital surveillance programs. Allocating billions of dollars to detention and deportation will not increase national security but will instead institutionalize fear, erode civil rights and civil liberties, and inflict lasting harm on individuals and communities.

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**Institutes a moratorium on the enforcement of state laws on artificial intelligence (AI), which will undo progress that has been made to protect people from AI risks and harms.** At a time when communities across the country are demanding clear safeguards for how AI is developed and used, states should not be denied their authority to act, when Congress has refused to regulate. A 10-year moratorium will prevent states from addressing AI harms, from deep fakes and disinformation to algorithmic discrimination, leaving people vulnerable and exposed to this technology. This moratorium means that the public will be left without redress when companies use an algorithm that can cause harm, bad actors use AI to interfere with elections, and scammers utilize the technology to take advantage of vulnerable communities. Instead of prioritizing constituents, Congress is prioritizing companies. By deflecting on passing federal protections, Congress is allowing the tech industry to operate without checks, and eliminating the existing civil rights safeguards in this space.


**Improperly limits courts' powers to enforce federal court orders.** Our federal courts should be independent and fair, and federal judges must recognize and protect the civil rights of all people. This means that courts must have available remedies to assure compliance with the Constitution and laws. Already, the administration has taken a number of unlawful and unconstitutional actions that have been temporarily halted by numerous federal courts. Still, many have improperly suggested that the administration should and could fail to comply with a court order, and there have been attempts to do so already, which undermine the basic tenets of the rule of law. Restricting federal courts from using appropriated funds to enforce contempt orders for failure to comply with an injunction or temporary restraining order (TRO) unless the plaintiff posts exorbitant bonds would be extremely harmful. This provision would apply to any and all injunctions or TROs, including retroactively, if no security was provided. The bill would also make it difficult for plaintiffs to challenge unconstitutional or unlawful actions unless they could provide security, which would pose an unreasonable burden on individuals and entities seeking remedies for the violation of their rights.

**Finally, we continue to urge members not to advance a reconciliation bill, or any other budget or appropriations measure, until the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) is thoroughly investigated and reined in.** DOGE continues to operate with alarming secrecy and unauthorized access to sensitive personal data and use of AI systems from various agencies across the federal government. Federal courts have already issued injunctions curbing some of DOGE's overreach, citing violations of privacy laws and potential harm to millions of people, and Congress should intervene as well. Until DOGE's activities are stopped, made fully transparent, and held accountable, proceeding with reconciliation legislation risks further compromising people's privacy and undermining congressional budget authority and public trust. Congress must ensure that taxpayer dollars and personal data are protected from misuse before moving forward with any fiscal measures.

We urge you to vote NO on the House budget reconciliation bill, H. Con. Res. 14, which proposes cuts and investments that would significantly harm civil and human rights. If you have any questions, please be in touch with Kanya Bennett, Managing Director of Government Affairs, at [bennett@civilrights.org](mailto:bennett@civilrights.org).

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Sincerely,



Jesselyn McCurdy  
Executive Vice President of Government Affairs