



December 2008

Dear Friend:

Today the United States is confronting the most serious economic downturn in many decades. As we head into 2009, an increasing number of low- and moderate-income working families and individuals are struggling financially and, more than ever before, are likely to need help from two federal tax benefits, the Earned Income Credit (EIC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC). This year, eligible families can get as much as \$4,824 from the EIC, and more if they also qualify for the CTC. Many will need to rely on these credits to help them keep up with household bills and even to help stave off more dire situations, such as mortgage foreclosure. Workers who have been holding jobs that have long provided security for their families may now be grappling with unemployment and do not know where to turn. They may not realize they could qualify for the credits. These and other pressing circumstances have pushed to the forefront the need for effective outreach to ensure that eligible workers know about the credits and how to claim them.

In 2007, 23.1 million eligible families and individuals claimed EICs worth \$44.6 billion. Yet, despite this impressive showing, millions more eligible individuals did not file for the credits and ended up forgoing millions of dollars for which they qualified. Now, when the stakes are so high for struggling families, your involvement in outreach can help ensure that these vital benefits do not go unclaimed.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities' Tax Credit Outreach Campaign, now in its 19th year, is working with a broad network of organizations like yours to promote the credits and link low-income workers to free tax filing assistance. To help you as you undertake new outreach efforts or revitalize an existing campaign, we are pleased to send you the enclosed 2009 Tax Credit Outreach Campaign kit. The materials inside explore six key elements of an effective outreach campaign. In addition, the kit contains full-color posters, flyers, fact sheets, a full stock of outreach strategy ideas, and a guide to finding even more information on our Tax Credit Outreach Campaign website, www.cbpp.org/eic2009.

If you have any questions or would like to order additional materials — and to find out about special outreach training opportunities — please contact us at 202-408-1080 or eickit@cbpp.org. Thanks for helping eligible workers claim the benefits they've earned.

Sincerely,
The Tax Credit Outreach Campaign Team