

## Calling Kitsap's caring

November 18, 2014

Caring people abound in Kitsap County! I noticed a recent article (Soap for Hope drive begins in Kitsap County), where AAA Washington kicks off their annual donation drive to collect toiletries for local shelter and food banks.

In fact, 277,670 visits were made to eight Kitsap food banks in 2013. The U.S. census tells us that one in seven children in Kitsap County have been growing up in poverty. This compares with one in five kids nationally who live in poverty.

Meanwhile, this summer the U.S. House of Representatives passed an expansion of the Child Tax Credit for upper-income families while removing this critical support for millions of low-income children and their families. This, on top of proposals for nearly \$600 billion in new tax breaks for corporations.

Did you know that the cost to the average tax payer per year for food stamps is \$36, while the cost to the average tax payer for corporate subsidies is \$870 (info from Cato Institute)? From 1980 to 2012, the median U.S. household income grew 9 percent, while corporate profits grew 239 percent. Important improvements to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC), which lifted 8.8 million people out of poverty in 2013 - are set to expire if Congress doesn't act.

Unlike welfare, families and individuals must be employed to receive EITC benefits. Statistics show that the EITC succeeds at helping families get back on their feet such that EITC recipients pay more in federal income taxes over time than they receive in EITC benefits. Most EITC recipients get the credit for two years or less.

Our new Congress needs to address the needs of all of us, not just the top 10 percent. Improvements to the EITC and the CTC needs to be made permanent.

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