

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING IS MORE EXPENSIVE

Expanding the Child Tax Credit Will Help Georgia Families Keep Up



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As families across Georgia prepare to send their children back to school, they face rising costs for school supplies thanks to President Trump's reckless tariffs.

These tariffs have raised costs on a wide range of imported goods, including many products commonly found on school supply lists. When families are already struggling to balance housing, healthcare, travel, and childcare costs, preparing for the school year is yet another expense to consider.

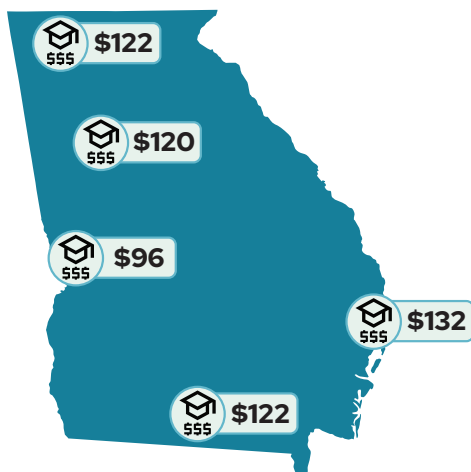
The Office of Senator Warnock, Ranking Member of Finance Subcommittee on Trade, Customs, & Global Competitiveness, examined 4th grade school shopping lists in Georgia in five schools across Georgia, in both urban and rural areas, and found total costs from \$96 to over \$130 per child. The Trump tariff taxes have raised costs on many of these items.

Congress must pass the ***American Family Act*** to expand the Child Tax Credit and finally give families some relief:

- ▶ Under ***American Family Act***, families would receive up to \$360 per month for kids under 6 and \$300 per month for kids aged 6-17. That is money in families' pockets to cover essential costs like school supplies, tutoring, or childcare.
- ▶ Under current law, families receive, at most, the equivalent of \$183 per month, and they can only access it when filing their taxes—not during times like back-to-school.
- ▶ Worse, federal law currently punishes the children of low-income parents. Over 460,000 children in Georgia are living in poverty, the fifth highest child poverty rate in the nation.¹ Despite that, nearly 1 in 3 children in Georgia cannot access to full Child Tax Credit, and the children of the poorest parents are the worse off.² The American Family Act would treat children equally, instead of depriving them based on what their parents make.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SHOPPING AND SHOCKING STICKER PRICES

The Office of Senator Warnock examined fourth grade shopping lists in five elementary schools across Georgia. The total cost to supply one student ranged from \$96 to \$132. For a family with multiple school-aged children, the total costs can be in the hundreds of dollars.



From the Blue Ridge Mountains to metro Atlanta to coastal Georgia, families are spending hundreds on back-to-school supplies.

President Trump's tariff taxes have only made this situation worse. Many of the most common school supplies are manufactured in areas subject to crushing tariffs:

Colored Pencils

Crayola, a leading manufacturer of colored pencils, manufactures their colored pencils in Brazil.³ Their CEO has noted, "Moving colored pencil manufacturing out of Brazil would not be practical." In July 2026, the Trump administration began imposing a 25% tariff on most Brazilian goods.⁴

Pens and Markers

The world's top exporter of pens and markers is China,⁵ and the average statutory tariff rate on China is 26.9%.⁶

Index Cards

India was the United States' second largest trading partner for index cards in 2024 (China was the largest).⁷ The average tariff rate on Indian imports is 9.3%⁸ following attempts to establish a 25% tariff on Indian imports.⁹

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, prices for educational books and supplies, such as elementary, high school, and college textbooks and reference books, have increased by 8.4% since 2024.¹⁰ According to a recent analysis by the Century Foundation and Groundwork Collaborative, prices for school supplies overall are up 7.7% and lunchbox staples are up 10.9%.¹¹ Price increases for specific types of items can be even higher.

THE COST OF BACK-TO-SCHOOL SUPPLIES IS RISING

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost in 2025</i>	<i>Cost in 2026</i>	<i>% Increase</i>
Crayola, 36-Pack Colored Pencils ¹²	\$4.94	\$6.49	31.4%
Lunch Box ¹³	\$14.91	\$18.91	26.8%
One-Subject Notebook ¹⁴	\$4.00	\$4.92	23.0%
Index Cards ¹⁵	\$3.16	\$3.86	22.2%
No. 2 Pencils ¹⁶	\$11.16	\$11.84	6.1%
Markers ¹⁷	\$2.16	\$2.26	4.6%

WHY WE NEED THE AMERICAN FAMILY ACT AND AN EXPANDED CHILD TAX CREDIT

President Trump's disastrous economic policies continue to stretch families' already-tight budgets. Wages have not kept up with inflation while prices have risen at the fastest rate in three years.¹⁸

In face of these rising costs, families need help now. The Child Tax Credit is the single largest program supporting families with children, and it does not go far enough. Currently, the Child Tax Credit is worth up to \$2,200 per child. However, the tax credit is only paid out once per year, not when families need it. Worse, the current structure punishes America's poorest children. Only children whose parents make above a certain income threshold qualify for the full amount, leaving the poorest children the worst off.



Here is how the ***American Family Act***,¹⁹ which is co-led by Senators Warnock and Bennett and supported by 43 additional Senators, would help:

Increase the Amount of the Child Tax Credit

The American Family Act would increase the current maximum child tax credit from \$2,200 for children under 17 to \$4,320 for children under 6 (\$360 per month) and \$3,600 for children between 6 and 17 years old (\$300 per month).

Add a Baby Bonus

One of the most expensive times for parents is at birth. Between hospital bills, diapers, formula, car seat, stroller, and more, parents need extra support for newborns. That's why the American Family Act would give a one-time credit of \$2,400 for new parents. With over 126,000 births per year in Georgia,²⁰ that's over \$300 million back in the pockets of new parents in Georgia annually.

Make the Expansion Permanent

Families need certainty. Expansion of the Child Tax Credit works. In 2021, when the tax credit was temporarily expanded, the child poverty rate in Georgia fell by 42.7 percent.²¹ In 2022, with the expiration of this temporary expansion, the poverty rate rose again.²² By making this expansion permanent, the American Family Act would ensure that families can depend on effective tools to lift children out of poverty.

Help Poor and Working-Class Children

Every child deserves our help, and we should not punish children for their parents' income. Federal law currently limits the value of the Child Tax Credit based on their parents' income—a factor that is beyond the child's control. As a result, nearly 1 in 3 children in Georgia are not eligible for the full credit because of how little their parents make.²³ The American Family Act would treat children equally, so that the children of low-income and working-class parents could also access the full credit.²⁴

	<i>Current Law</i>	<i>American Family Act</i>
Maximum Annual Value of the CTC	\$2,200 per child	\$4,320 for children under 6 \$3,600 for children 6-17
Value of One-Time Baby Bonus	\$0	\$2,400
When can families access the credit?	Only once, when filing their tax return	Received every month
Can poor and working-class children benefit?	No – nearly 1 in 3 children in Georgia cannot access the full credit because of how little their parents make.	Yes – every child is treated equally.

These changes mean more money in the pockets of working families, as the following examples illustrate.²⁵



Example One

Liam, age 5, and Olivia, age 3, are the two children of a police officer in Atlanta making \$61,000 per year²⁶ as a single parent.

CURRENT LAW

Liam and Olivia's family receive \$4,400 in the Child Tax Credit at tax time.

AMERICAN FAMILY ACT

Liam and Olivia's family receive \$8,640 per year, \$720 per month.



Example Two

Elijah is born in January 2025 to two parents employed by a carpet manufacturing facility in Dalton, Georgia.²⁷ His parents make \$80,000 together.

CURRENT LAW

Elijah's parents receive a Child Tax Credit worth \$2,200 when they file their taxes the following year, in April 2026, when Elijah is now a 15 month old toddler.

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Elijah's parents would receive a \$2,400 baby bonus within weeks of Elijah's birth and \$360 each month after for a total of \$6,360 during Elijah's first year.



Example Three

Ava, age 10, is the child of a single mother working a full-time, minimum wage job in Savannah's hospitality industry.²⁸

CURRENT LAW

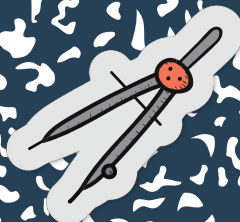
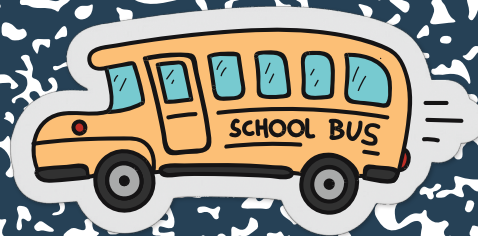
Ava's family receives only \$1,700 in the Child Tax Credit. Ava will lose out on \$500 solely because of how little her mom makes.

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Ava is treated the same as every other child. Her family would receive a total of \$3,600 per year, \$300 per month.

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