A Refundable EITC Helps Working Families in Every District: Spring 2019 Update

Latest Analysis Shows the Number of Families Currently Receiving the Earned Income Tax Credit

By Chris Wodicka and Michael J. Cassidy

Over 600,000 of Virginia’s working families currently receive the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). For families struggling to make ends meet, these tax credits make a difference in terms of putting food on the table, affording child care, and staying current on utility bills. The federal EITC is one of the biggest success stories we have.

Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have enacted their own state EITCs to supplement the federal credit. Virginia’s state EITC began in 2006 and is available to working people who claim the federal EITC on their tax returns, equaling 20 percent of the value of the federal EITC. Like the federal credit, Virginia’s credit rewards and encourages work, gives a boost to families, and improves the long-term prospects for children.

However, Virginia’s version of the credit is different from the federal version and the EITCs in 23 other states and DC. Because the state puts overly tight limits on how much of the credit a family can claim, Virginia’s EITC does not allow all 600,000 families to receive the full value of the credit they’ve earned. This structure of Virginia’s state EITC leaves over $200 million in help on the table each year. That’s money that would give working people a wage boost at a time when wages are stagnant.

During the 2020 legislative session, Virginia lawmakers have an opportunity to help Virginia’s working families by expanding the state EITC by making it refundable. This issue brief provides the latest numbers of families who receive the EITC in each state Senate and House district (reflecting the final federal court-ordered redistricting map), as well as in each locality.
# Table 1. Families Who Receive the Federal EITC by Senate District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senators</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>EITC Recipients</th>
<th>Localities in Senate District</th>
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Source: Tax Policy Center analysis of 2015 IRS-SPEC data
Updated: November 6, 2018
Number of EITC Returns by Virginia Senate District

Source: Tax Policy Center analysis of 2015 IRS-SPEC data

Number of EITC Returns by Virginia House District

Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities analysis of 2016 IRS-SOI data

Note: Reflects Court Ordered Final Remedial Plan
### Table 2. Families Who Receive the Federal EITC by House District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delegates</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>EITC Recipients</th>
<th>Localities in House District</th>
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Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities analysis of 2016 IRS-SOI data
Updated: February 26, 2019 to reflect Court Ordered Final Remedial Plan
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Source: TCI analysis of 2016 IRS-SOI data

Updated: November 6, 2018
Working families tax credits, like the EITC, have significant benefits – from improved infant health to increased college enrollment to higher incomes as adults for children whose families received the credit.

A refundable EITC is a targeted economic boost that could have positive effects across the commonwealth.