



2025 August Recess Toolkit

Reclaim Recess: Our Voices. Our Power.



Engaging members of Congress on issues important to
women and girls of color.

Women's Equity Center and Action Network (WE CAN)

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RECLAIM RECESS: OUR VOICES. OUR POWER.

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Why This Moment Demands Our Voices

Introduction




Members of Congress are already back home—and it's time to make sure they hear from **us**. The “Big Beautiful Bill” that just passed in Washington is a **devastating attack** on the health, safety, and economic security of low-income communities—**especially women and girls of color**. With cuts to *Medicaid (safety-net health insurance program for vulnerable populations)*, *SNAP, housing support, childcare, and job training*, this bill is not just unjust—it's a deliberate choice to **sacrifice our survival** for political gain.

As if that weren't enough, federal immigration raids are escalating, sweeping up parents, workers, neighbors, and children in what can only be described as **mass kidnappings**. These cruel policies don't just target one group—they are a threat to **all of us**. When one of our communities is under attack, it's a warning of what's next for the rest.

We cannot afford to watch in silence. **We must stand in solidarity—Black, Brown, Indigenous, immigrant, and undocumented—because what impacts one of us ripples through all of us.**

Our elected officials are not royalty. They are not above us. They are **public servants who work for us**—and it's time they start acting like it. This recess, we need to demonstrate our power outside the voting booth and show up at town halls, flood their social media accounts, organize in our communities, and speak truth to power. We're not just voters. We are advocates, caregivers, providers, organizers, protectors—and we demand policies that address our needs, value our lives, support our leadership, and affirm our worth as women and human beings contributing to this country.

This toolkit is your action guide and contains:

-  Summary of the “Big Beautiful Bill” and the harms it will cause women and girls of color
-  Sample questions to ask at town hall meetings
-  Graphics and social media posts to amplify our collective voice

WE CAN created this toolkit as a reminder that **we have both the right and the obligation** to hold every single elected official accountable to us and our communities.

Let's flood town halls, district offices, and community meetings with the **power and clarity of women of color who will not be ignored**. Because if we don't fight for our future, who will?

The stakes are high. The moment is now. Let's move.

So, What Does the Big Beautiful Bill Mean for Us?

The **One Big Beautiful Bill Act** (aka the **OBBB** or **BBB**), or the “**Big Beautiful Bill**” (P.L. 119-21), was signed into law by the president on July 4th, 2025. The irony that this very harmful bill was passed on America’s Independence Day, when it will lead to more women, children, and families being less able to survive and thrive, is almost laughable. Here is a summary of the BBB, using the following WE CAN’s equity-centered impact areas: **Health and Wellness**, **Safety and Justice**, **Economic Security**, and **Civic Engagement and Voting Rights**. This format highlights how the bill disproportionately harms **women and girls of color, low-income families, veterans, immigrants, and older people**. Hyperlinks for those who would like more information are included throughout.

Health and Wellness

BBB makes deep cuts to Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA), drastically reducing access to care for millions.

- **Medicaid Cuts:** The bill imposes **work requirements** and **copays up to \$35** for low-income people, which the [Center for American Progress](#) estimates will cause **10.9 million people** to lose coverage—disproportionately affecting Black and Latina women and elderly individuals relying on long-term care.
- **Ban on Gender-Affirming Care:** BBB **prohibits Medicaid and CHIP from covering gender-affirming healthcare** for people of all ages—an unprecedented federal overreach targeting transgender youth and adults, especially those from communities of color ([Them Magazine](#)).
- **Reproductive Health Restrictions:** Blocks funding to any clinics that offer or refer for abortion—even if those services are not paid for with federal funds—limiting reproductive health access for low-income women of color ([Center for American Progress](#)).

Who’s Hurt Most?

- Low-income women of color lose access to maternal and preventive care.
- Transgender youth and adults are denied life-saving treatments.
- Seniors face higher costs and more red tape to get care.

Safety and Justice

BBB expands funding for punitive systems while reducing resources that support community-based safety.

- **Immigration Enforcement:** The bill allocates over **\$150 billion to ICE** for mass deportation infrastructure, aiming to deport over **1 million people per year**—leading to **family separations**, including the deportation of parents from mixed-status families ([American Immigration Council](#)).

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- **Surveillance of Medicaid/ACA Recipients:** Enhanced data-sharing across federal agencies increases scrutiny of low-income individuals, especially immigrants and people of color, contributing to a criminalization of poverty and survival.
 - **No Protections for LGBTQ+ or Immigrant Youth:** The bill offers no funding for anti-violence programs or protections for marginalized youth, which often leaves women, queer folks, and immigrants vulnerable to interpersonal and systemic violence.

Who's Hurt Most?

- Immigrant women and families who face detention, deportation, or are afraid to seek care.
- Low-income communities are increasingly policed under the guise of fraud prevention or immigration enforcement.

Economic Security

Despite promises of prosperity, BBB weakens programs that support working-class families while rewarding the wealthy.

- **SNAP Cuts:** Reduces food assistance by **\$186 billion over 10 years**, reintroducing strict **work requirements (80 hours/month)** that disproportionately affect caregivers, part-time workers, and people with unstable employment ([AP News](#)).
- **Eliminates Key Tax Credits:** Ends the Child Tax Credit expansions, hitting families of color and low-income parents hardest.
- **Favors Wealthy Taxpayers:** Reintroduces large tax deductions that **benefit the top 10%** of earners while increasing the national deficit by **\$2.8 trillion**—placing future social programs at risk ([PolitiFact](#)).
- **No Living Wage Investments:** The bill fails to invest in wage growth, job training, or local workforce development, harming veterans, low-income women, and older adults who are under- or unemployed.

Who's Hurt Most?

- Women of color raising families on minimum wage.
- Older adults living on fixed incomes.
- Veterans who rely on SNAP or Medicaid.

Civic Engagement & Voting Rights

Though not framed as an election bill, BBB contains provisions that weaken access to democratic participation.

- **Underfunds Community Programs:** Cuts to nonprofit and public service programs mean fewer resources for voter education, civic mobilization, and community engagement—especially in communities of color.

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- **Disenfranchisement through Bureaucracy:** Increased Medicaid and SNAP verification rules and frequent income checks create layers of paperwork and surveillance that drive people out of public programs and civic life due to fear or fatigue.
 - **No Protections for Voters:** The bill does nothing to support election security or access in marginalized communities, failing to address issues like voter suppression, polling place closures, or language access.

Who's Hurt Most?

- Women of color who lead voter registration drives in their communities.
- Seniors and disabled individuals who rely on mail-in voting and community supports.
- Immigrant communities who rely on culturally relevant civic education to participate.

So, What Is a Town Hall Meeting—And Why Should I Show Up?

A **town hall meeting** is when your elected official—your member of Congress, senator, city council rep, or mayor—comes *home* to hear directly from the people they were elected to serve.

That's **you**, sis.

It's not a formal hearing. It's not a debate. It's **your chance to look them in the eye and tell them precisely what is happening in your homes and your communities**—rent that's too high, food benefits getting cut, clinics closing, your child's school underfunded, or fear in your community from ICE raids and over-policing.

Think of it like this:

🗨️ It's **testifying without the courtroom**.

🗣️ It's **speaking your truth to power**.

🗳️ It's **reminding them who they work for—and who can vote them out**.

Too often, women of color don't show up for these meetings. Sometimes it's because we don't even know when the meetings are held! Take a moment to use [WE CAN's Find Your Elected Official Look Up Tool](#), subscribe to their newsletters, and follow them on social media.

Town hall meetings are GREAT opportunities to ask direct questions and share your thoughts with elected officials. Be prepared for some lawmakers to avoid hosting town halls, especially if their recent votes are detrimental to their home districts. When you attend a town hall, pack your patience. You will likely be among the hundreds ready to share their opinions and demands with lawmakers! Please bring your questions (WE CAN provides some sample questions below). Bring your receipts. Bring your aunties, your homegirls, your sorors, your neighbors.

Because when we show up together?

★ *That's the real power in the room.*

“

The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any.

ALICE WALKER



Sample Questions to Ask in Town Hall Meetings

Here are **sample questions** you can ask during a **town hall meeting this August**—sharp, direct, and rooted in lived experience. They're designed to **hold elected officials accountable** for their recent votes, support for legislation under consideration in the 119th Congress, and amplify the urgent needs of women and girls of color.

◆ ECONOMIC SECURITY

- Why are billionaires getting tax breaks while support for low-income and working people on the chopping block? Can you explain how that helps working women like me?
- What are you doing to support equal pay and access to jobs for women of color in your district?
- How will you make sure that economic policies reach Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities? Put equity back on the table and deliver it?

◆ **HEALTH & WELLNESS**

- How do you feel about the Big Beautiful Bill and the cuts to Medicaid? What do you propose to do to ensure women of color have health care when they need it?
- Will you advocate for expanded funding for mental health programs that serve communities of color—not just policing in disguise?
- Many women of color in our district have lost access to clinics and reproductive care. What will you do to restore and protect our healthcare?

◆ **SAFETY & SECURITY**

- Do you support more money for police while cutting programs that prevent violence and support survivors in our communities?
- What investments will you fight for that create real safety—like housing, healing, and youth programs—not just more criminalization?
- Will you oppose the illegal ICE raids, family separation, and deportation that are taking place right now in communities across the country? Do you believe immigrants in our communities deserve safety and dignity?

◆ **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY**

- How will you protect the voting rights of women of color and other marginalized communities from voter suppression tactics?
- What bills have you introduced or co-sponsored that directly address the needs of women of color in this district?
- Why should we trust you with our votes? How do your policies and positions positively affect our lives? What will you change in the future?
- Will you commit to holding regular meetings with grassroots leaders from communities of color—not just big donors and lobbyists?
- How are you making sure women of color are not just ‘heard’—but shaping the policies that come out of your office?

Social Media Toolkit

WE CAN has created social media posts you can use to share with family and friends, inviting them to join you in raising your voice on issues impacting you and your community. The resources are free and easy to share! Click the image below to access [social media tools](#) you can use NOW!

