

For Immediate Release

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House GOP Backs Savings for Working Families Act in the “American Families Agenda”

Washington, DC — Republican leaders in the House endorsed the [Savings for Working Families Act](#) (SWFA) as part of the broad GOP legislative agenda announced Wednesday—refueling momentum for its passage. The Republican plan touts the bill to create matched savings accounts for low-income families as a significant measure to grow small businesses to strengthen American families’ financial stability.

Andrea Levere, president of the national nonprofit, [Corporation for Enterprise Development](#) (CFED), said the inclusion of SWFA demonstrates welcomed progress. “We at CFED are very pleased that the Savings for Working Families Act is seen by these prominent legislators as part of the solution to legislative inaction in Washington to address the national personal savings crisis and growing wealth gap. CFED has always worked assiduously with both Republicans and Democrats to promote an agenda of economic opportunity, fairness and asset building for all. We have always believed that the Savings for Working Families Act could bring together Members of Congress from both parties, and the bill’s inclusion in the latest GOP agenda for change underscores that belief. CFED appreciates Congressman Joe Pitts’ (R-PA) efforts to call for an expansion of matched savings accounts in the GOP’s legislative agenda. We will continue to work with our friends in the public and private sector, as well as legislators on Capitol Hill until this important legislation becomes law.”

SWFA has already amassed more [congressional support](#) this year, 93 House cosponsors and 25 Senate cosponsors, than at any time since the bill was originally introduced. As in years past, it has a large, bipartisan list of cosponsors, led by Representatives Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH) and Joseph Pitts (R-PA) and Senators Joe Lieberman (I) and Jim Bunning (R-KY).

SWFA would [create 900,000 individual development accounts](#) (IDAs) over a ten-year period. This would be a dramatic increase from the current 73,000 IDAs nationwide. IDAs are essential elements of a poverty-reduction, asset-building strategy CFED has long pioneered. IDAs have proven repeatedly to be an effective tool to connect low income families to the financial mainstream, encourage savings and help them purchase an asset including a first home, the start or expansion of a small business or the pursuit of higher education. Recent data shows that since 1999, low-income families have used IDAs to purchase more than 8,400 homes; 6,000 IDA purchases were used towards post-secondary education or training; and 5,200 IDA purchases were used towards capitalizing a small business.

“The renewed attention to SWFA will enhance our long-term efforts to make IDAs available to millions of deserving Americans who are ready to save and start businesses, buy homes or attend college,” says Levere. “Passage of SWFA would represent an important advance in CFED’s efforts to establish an asset building system that helps lift more Americans into the economic mainstream.”

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CFED expands economic opportunity by helping Americans start and grow businesses, go to college, own a home and save for their children’s and their own economic futures. We identify promising ideas, test and

refine them in communities to find out what works, craft policies and products to help good ideas reach scale, and develop partnerships to promote lasting change. We bring together community practice, public policy and private markets in new and effective ways to achieve greater economic impact.

Established in 1979, CFED works nationally and internationally through its offices in Washington, DC; Durham, NC; and San Francisco, CA.