

Written by Kathy

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WASHINGTON, DC– Ohio Congresswoman Shontel Brown (OH-11) (pictured), a Warrensville Hts Democrat whose 11th congressional district includes Cleveland and several of its eastern suburbs of Cuyahoga County, and federal lawmakers of the Democratic Women's Caucus (DMC) joined a press call with officials of the U.S. Department of Labor to discuss the release of a report by the department's Women's Bureau on how caring for family has long-term impacts on a woman's lifetime earnings.

Rep Brown and fellow DWC Communications Co-Chair Congresswoman Gwen Moore (WI-04) and Congresswoman Susan Wild (PA-07) joined Women's Bureau Director Wendy Chun-Hoon and Women's Bureau Senior Advisor Sarah Jane Glynn for the discussion.

The report, [Lifetime Employment-Related Costs to Women of Providing Family Care](#), finds that the amount of time women spend providing essential care to children and adults has a substantial personal economic cost that continues long after the care-giving ends. The estimated employment-related costs for mothers providing unpaid care averages \$295,000 over a lifetime, based on the 2021 U.S. dollar value, adjusted for inflation, the reports says. Moreover, unpaid family care-giving reduces a mother's lifetime earnings by 15 percent, which also creates a reduction in retirement income.

"This report is a call to action. All families should have access to affordable childcare if we want to have an inclusive economy," said Brown. "Families across the nation and from all demographics are struggling with high childcare costs."

The congresswoman went on to say that the financial burden is especially high in historically

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marginalized communities, including Black mothers, as they are the least likely to scale back employment after having children due to challenging economic conditions. And a lack of affordable care puts more pressure on families.

"Our children, mothers and families in Northeast Ohio deserve better," the congresswoman said.

Congresswoman Moore, a Wisconsin Democrat, agreed.

"Unpaid care-giving is work and should be recognized as such. This report is another reminder of the long-term cost women incur by providing unpaid care, and it cannot go ignored," Moore said. "I am working to ensure our federal policies support those providing unpaid care to loved ones, uplifting women and their families, so we can build an equitable, modern economy."

Congresswoman Wild added that "women spend invaluable time providing compassionate, dedicated care for their children and family members – and their reduced lifetime earnings because of it illustrate just how important solving the childcare crisis is."

Although its findings rely on sophisticated modeling to focus on the costs associated with care-giving activities for mothers, the report – prepared for the Women's Bureau by the Urban Institute – acknowledges that the costs are likely conservative estimates that do not include the total economic costs borne by caregivers.

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We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview,

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