

August 17, 2015

Dear Senator Collins:

My name is Amy Scholl and I live in New Sharon. I strongly encourage you to make permanent key pieces of the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit, which are set to expire without your action.

For the past two years I was employed as a travel counselor at a local travel agency to support my family while attending school part-time. I recently began serving as an Americorp/VISTA member this month to gain additional experience for my future career.

I grew up in Maine, but like many, left to pursue my college education out of state. Fast forward a few years later, to a young women with a college degree, a young baby and a mountain of debt. I knew it was time for a change and I decided to come back to Maine.

The free tax help I found through Western Maine CA\$H was just the first step towards my future. I then participated in several programs at New Ventures Maine, formerly Women, Work, and Community, to help me learn new money management skills, develop better savings habits, and find a new career path. Since completing the classes I have paid off all of my debt with the exception of my student loans. With the help of my tax refunds I live within my income and have even been able to save toward unexpected or planned expenses like car repairs or a family vacation.

I plan to graduate with a degree in Organizational and Community Practice in 2017 and be able to work with organizations like the ones who helped me and to advocate for those who voices are not being heard.

As a graduate student there are fewer options for financial aid and my tax refund helps me to reduce the financial costs that I incur during the school year. Due to my tax refund I am able to reduce the amount of loans that I will have to pay back when I graduate.

Congress has a chance this year to save these working family tax provisions. These pro-work tax credits help millions of hard-working Americans like me make ends meet, go to work, attend college and provide the basics for their children. Without them, it will be harder to pay for things like child care and transportation that enable us to work and go to school. As you consider tax legislation this year, please make sure that working families are not left behind.

Thank you.

Amy Scholl

Email, Address, Phone Number