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The Federal Tax Plan that Leaves Watauga's Kids Behind

Leah R. Hamilton, Appalachian State University

In the High Country, families are struggling to keep up with the cost of living. Rents have soared while wages have lagged behind. More than half of renter households here spend over 30% of their income on housing. The median household income in Watauga is \$51,400, and this isn't enough for single parents with more than one kid to cover basic expenses like food and bills. Nearly half of our residents are considered low-income, and more than one in 10 children live in poverty.

These numbers represent the quiet anxiety behind every grocery run and the difficult tradeoffs families make when choosing between a utility bill and a school supply list. As someone who studies family economic policy, I can say with confidence: there's a better way forward.