

## Holding the line for Iowa families

Common Good Iowa envisions a state where children and families are healthy and secure, workers thrive, and clean air and water contribute to a healthy future for all. Even in tough political times, that north star drives our work. With your help, CGI continues to be a stalwart and credible presence in our state, helping to confront spin with plain-language analysis and reliable data. **Here's what we accomplished together in 2024.**

### Fighting off dangerous tax plans



**“Common Good Iowa did not back off its criticism of the previous or proposed state income tax reductions.”**

— Erin Murphy, Quad City Times, “Reynolds proposes speeding up Iowa income tax cuts,” January 9

Common Good Iowa led the charge during the 2024 legislative session to defeat draconian plans to eliminate Iowa’s personal income tax. CGI started framing the debate before lawmakers convened in Des Moines, showing the recklessness of cuts that would ultimately nearly halve the state budget and devastate our ability to meet our shared responsibilities. And, in fact, the Governor started scaling back her elimination rhetoric even before session started. Once it did, CGI generated rapid-response analysis, testified at the Capitol, and served as the primary voice for fair taxes in the media.

Unable to move their elimination plan, leaders ditched it for much smaller tax cuts. Our state faces serious challenges from this and past years’ tax bills, but **by fighting off elimination, we slowed tax cutters’ momentum.**

“Low-income Iowans already pay a higher share of their incomes in total state and local taxes than higher-income Iowans. Cutting the income tax to a flat rate tilts the overall system further in favor of the highest earners. I’ve heard that dismissed as a mere philosophical difference, and, yes, it is. **We simply do not believe we should pay for our shared responsibilities on the backs of working Iowans.**”

— Executive Director Anne Discher, testifying before a House subcommittee in April

“Even without the impact of the tax cuts yet to be implemented, Iowa has held per-pupil education spending growth at 2% on average for 14 years. **That wouldn’t keep pace with costs in your household, and it doesn’t in schools or in the households of people who work in them, either.**”

— Deputy Director Mike Owen, in a May 23 Dubuque Telegraph-Herald op-ed

### Report: Iowa construction workers losing money from illegal practices



### Promoting good jobs in clean energy

Common Good Iowa is shaping the debate on the future of Iowa’s construction industry. A new report from policy analyst Sean Finn outlines the threats and opportunities facing this important sector of our state’s economy. It highlights the growth of low-road practices like wage theft and illegally misclassifying employees as independent contractors — and offers high-road state and local policy solutions and federal green-energy opportunities. **We’ll hold strong for policies that create good jobs as Iowa builds for the future and continues its transition to wind and solar power.**

## Defending children at work

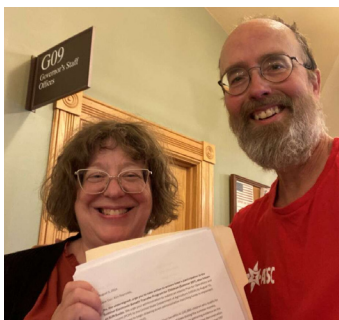
CGI joined organized labor in explaining the dangers of new state laws that weakened safety and health protections for children in the workplace — going lower than baselines set by the U.S. Department of Labor. The Biden administration has since responded to Iowa’s law with fines for employers violating federal rules, affirming the arguments CGI and our partners made against Iowa’s dangerous moves.

“To Iowa Restaurant Association CEO Jessica Dunker’s ostensible surprise, the federal Department of Labor has been conducting child labor investigations in Iowa and charging employers for violating federal law, even though they weren’t violating state law. This illustrates a basic principle of government that most high-schoolers understand — **federal laws still apply even when states have different ones.**”

— Policy Analyst Sean Finn writing in June



## Getting kids fed



CGI’s Anne Discher and American Friends Service Committee’s John Krieg delivered a petition to Gov. Reynolds in August, asking her to sign onto SUN Bucks.

CGI is a key member of the Iowa Hunger Coalition, highlighting the folly of the Governor’s 2024 rejection of Summer EBT. The program, now named SUN Bucks, helps families with school-aged children put food on the table when school meals aren’t available. CGI represented the coalition in the media and at the Governor’s office, delivering a petition signed by over 3,500 Iowans asking her to sign onto the federal initiative for 2025.

Feeling the pressure, instead of opting out entirely, the Governor proposed an alternative — since rejected by the USDA — that would distribute boxed food, taking no account of families’ food preferences, dietary needs or cultural traditions. **We’ll keep fighting for SUN Bucks to make sure no Iowa kid goes hungry when school is out.**

## Strengthening child care

Pushed by Common Good Iowa and the Iowa Child Care Coalition, lawmakers this spring increased state reimbursement to providers participating in Child Care Assistance. **The move offers a meaningful pay raise to the “workforce behind the workforce,”** essential but low-paid workers who make it possible for Iowa parents to work and get ahead.



CGI’s Sheila Hansen, left, and Iowa AEYC’s Jeannine Laughlin delivered finger puppets to legislators on behalf of the Iowa Child Care Coalition to promote quality, affordable early learning.

### Imagine yourself at 16, all by yourself with 7 toddlers ...

In one corner of the room are Emma and Joseph, who are both potty training, and you look over and see them doing the little dance that toddlers do when they need to go — right now ...



But in the other corner you see Julio and Lilly fighting over a block, and Lilly is just about to bite Julio ...

And let’s not forget Jonah. He’s pushed a little chair across the room and is now climbing up to try to reach the crayons on the counter.

Which very real scenario do you react to first? Child care is a challenging and fast-paced job. The safety of children in child care should be our number one priority.

— Sheila Hansen explains implications of a proposal last session to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to care for babies and toddlers in child care centers without direct supervision. **The bill failed thanks to advocacy by CGI and other advocates.**

**“[SUN Bucks] would help almost a quarter of a million Iowa kids make sure they have healthy nutritious meals to eat during the summer next year.”**

— Anne Discher, on KCCI-TV in August