CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION: NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE THE WIC EXPERIENCE

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2018 elections shifted Congress into divided government

Large, diverse new class of representatives – including the first pediatrician in Congress: Rep. Kim Schrier (D-WA)

Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS) announced retirement at the end of his term
OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPACT WIC

- Two primary legislative vehicles that impact WIC:
  - **Appropriations:** The annual process that funds WIC, USDA, and other federal programs. Appropriations must generally be *authorized* by law in advance.
    - Congress is considering FY 2020 funding in the coming months, after a bipartisan budget deal was negotiated by Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.
    - The House bill funded WIC at $6 billion, a slight decrease from FY 2019 levels at $6.075 billion. The bill also included record investment in Breastfeeding Peer Counselors.
  - **Child Nutrition Reauthorization:** An irregular process (generally every 5 years) to renew the law that governs WIC regulations, policies, and procedures. This is the strongest opportunity to enact changes that will impact how WIC delivers services.
APPROPRIATIONS: KEY HOUSE LEADERS

House Appropriations Committee

Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY)
Chair

Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX)
Ranking Member

Agriculture Subcommittee

Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA)
Chair

Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE)
Ranking Member
APPROPRIATIONS: KEY SENATE LEADERS

Senate Appropriations Committee

Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL)  
Chair

Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT)  
Ranking Member

Agriculture Subcommittee

Senator John Hoeven (R-ND)  
Chair

Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR)  
Ranking Member
Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) has led to opportunities to improve WIC service delivery:

- 1989: Introduced adjunctive eligibility
- 2004: Established the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program
- 2010: Mandated states transition to EBT/e-WIC systems

The last reauthorization was the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

In 2015-2016, there was a process to consider CNR. The bill did not advance into law, although a bipartisan bill was produced by Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Pat Roberts (R-KS).
At the beginning of the year, Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Pat Roberts (R-KS) indicated interest in pursuing CNR in this Congress.

This spring, two hearings were held on child nutrition programs:

- House Education & Labor Committee, Subcommittee on Civil Rights & Human Services hearing in March 2019
- Senate Agriculture Committee hearing in April 2019

News reports indicate that the Senate Agriculture Committee is making progress on its bill.
CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION: KEY PLAYERS

**Senate Agriculture Committee**
- Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS) Chair
- Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) Ranking Member

**House Education & Labor Committee**
- Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA) Chair
- Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC) Ranking Member
CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION: KEY PLAYERS

Chairman Pat Roberts (R-KS)
Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
Sen. John Boozman (R-AR)
Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND)
Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA)
Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS)
Sen. Mike Braun (R-IN)
Sen. David Perdue (R-GA)
Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA)
Sen. John Thune (R-SD)
Sen. Deb Fischer (R-NE)

Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)
Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT)
Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH)
Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO)
Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)
Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA)
Sen. Tina Smith (D-MN)
Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL)
CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION: KEY PLAYERS

Subcmte. on Civil Rights and Human Services
Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), Chair
Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ)
Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH)
Rep. Kim Schrier (D-WA)
Rep. Jahana Hayes (D-CT)
Rep. David Trone (D-MD)
Rep. Susie Lee (D-NV)

Rep. James Comer (R-KY), Ranking Member
Rep. Glenn Thompson (R-PA)
Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY)
Rep. Dusty Johnson (R-SD)
WISE INVESTMENT IN OUR CHILDREN (WIC) ACT

- Introduced last week by Sens. Bob Casey (D-PA) and Susan Collins (R-ME)
- WIC Act expands access to services and streamlines service delivery
- Three provisions:
  - Extension of child eligibility to age six or the beginning of kindergarten
  - Extension of postpartum eligibility to two years
  - Extension of infant certification periods to two years
COMMUNITY ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND EDUCATION (CARE) FOR FAMILIES ACT

- Introduced in June by Reps. Alma Adams (D-NC), Lauren Underwood (D-IL), and Bobby Scott (D-VA)
- Bill would create a $15 million funding line for community health partnerships led by WIC local agencies
- The purpose of the partnerships would be to improve community-clinical linkages between WIC and healthcare providers, including enhancing referral networks
- These partnerships are modeled after NWA’s three-year CDC project, in partnership with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. NWA’s CDC project funded projects in over thirty local agencies
The certification appointment is one of the key opportunities to streamline the clinic experience, reduce burden on clinic staff and participants, and increase retention:

- Extended certification periods for all categories – infants, postpartum women, and children
- Enhanced adjunctive eligibility
- Permit family certifications
- Incorporate video technologies into certification
The majority of WIC funding provides for the provision of supplemental foods, putting pressure on state and local budgets. New funding lines and increased investment in proven priorities will empower state and local agencies to innovate and enhance WIC services.

- Reduce the burden of ongoing EBT/e-WIC costs
- Invest in state-driven innovations
- Increase investment in Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program
- Enhance funding for breastfeeding supplies
- Preserve integrity of infant formula cost containment
ADDITIONAL ADVOCACY PRIORITIES: 
ENHANCING WIC SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

- The introduction of EBT/e-WIC has helped make the WIC transaction more convenient for both the participant and the cashier. Additional steps to streamline the shopping experience will reduce administrative burden and improve access to healthy foods:
  - Fund pilot projects to evaluate online ordering models
  - Preserve the integrity of the food package review process
  - Fund pilot projects to enhance the Cash Value Voucher/Cash Value Benefit
  - Permit limited roll-over of unredeemed benefits
  - Allow for purchase of banked donor milk
  - Extend vendor authorization periods to align with SNAP
ADDITIONAL ADVOCACY PRIORITIES: STRENGTHENING WIC FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

- WIC’s partnerships with farmers markets can increase access to healthy foods and support local farmers.

- At farmers markets, participants can redeem the Cash Value Voucher/Benefit (CVV/CVB). In several states, WIC participants can also redeem WIC FMNP vouchers.

- The WIC FMNP transaction can be streamlined to increase efficiency and ensure higher redemption:
  - Invest in technology-based transaction solutions at farmers markets
  - Allow for higher benefit levels at farmers markets
HOW YOU CAN MAKE AN IMPACT

- Legislators will want to hear how the program is administered in their community. **Most legislators are in their home districts during their congressional recesses.**

- **Remember:** Legislative visits to a clinic are not necessarily lobbying activities.

- You can also take direct action to lift up positive WIC priorities by engaging with NWA’s Action Alerts.

- **NWA Resources:**
  - [https://www.nwica.org/child-nutrition-reauthorization-resources](https://www.nwica.org/child-nutrition-reauthorization-resources)
SETTING UP A CLINIC VISIT

OVERVIEW

ITEMS TO INCLUDE

https://www.nwica.org/advocacy
SETTING UP A CLINIC VISIT

WHO IS INVOLVED?
SETTING UP A CLINIC VISIT

WHO PARTICIPATES?
SETTING UP A CLINIC VISIT

ATTIRE

Dress to impress
Without looking a mess!
SUCCESSES

- CONCORD WIC VISIT (CA)
- SOUTHERN NUTRITION CENTER (TN)
- LEE WIC & WIC DISTRIBUTION CENTER (MS)
GET INVOLVED!

- NWA’s Legislative Committee leads the Association’s efforts to advance effective and positive WIC policy through Child Nutrition Reauthorization:
  - Janet Moran (Wyoming), Chair
  - Carolyn Steinmetz (Texas)
  - Celia Nabor (Arizona)
  - Christine O’Brien (Iowa)
  - Melinda Newport (Chickasaw Nation)
  - Perveen Ali (California)
  - Samar McGregor (California)
  - Theresa Landau (New York)
  - Tiare Sanna (Oregon)
QUESTIONS?

Connect with NWA’s Advocacy:
https://www.nwica.org/child-nutrition-reauthorization-resources

Connect with NWA’s Public Policy Team:

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