

Current WIC Policy Issues Explained

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Current WIC Policy Issues Explained

- 3 main policy areas
- Current WIC Appropriations asks and issues
- Current WIC Reauthorizations asks and issues
- WIC Food packages
- Advocacy vs. lobbying

3 Main Policy Areas

- Appropriations (legislative)
- Reauthorization (legislative)
- Food Package (regulatory)



WIC Appropriations

WIC Appropriations

- WIC is a discretionary program
- Congress must fund WIC each year
- Funding is not guaranteed
- Committees of jurisdiction: House and Senate Appropriations Committees

WIC Appropriations

FY2015

- Funding to meet all caseload needs
- \$60 million: breastfeeding peer counselor program
- \$55 million: MIS/EBT
- \$14 million: Infrastructure
- \$16 million: Program Initiatives and Evaluation

FY 2016 President's request

- Same as FY2015
- Level funding request

FY 2016 NWA Appropriations Asks

NWA ASKS FOR
MORE
INVESTMENT IN
WIC!

- Funding to meet all caseload needs
- \$90 million: breastfeeding peer counselor program
- \$80 million: MIS (\$30 million)/EBT (\$50 million)
- \$14 million: Infrastructure
- \$16 million: Program Initiatives and Evaluation with \$5 million for rigorous research
- \$6 million for enhanced breastfeeding CVV

FY2016 Challenge: Sequestration

- Not across-the-board cuts
- Appropriations Subcommittees get lower allocations
- WIC the largest program in Agriculture appropriations, so a target for cuts
- Sequestration is scheduled to happen through FY2021, meaning each year the Appropriations Committees will have less and less money to allocate

WIC Funding Outlook: Challenging



WIC Reauthorization

WIC Reauthorization

- Occurs every 5 years
- Changes WIC Policy
- Committees of jurisdiction
 - House Education and the Workforce Committee
 - Senate Agriculture Committee

Examples of Past Reauthorization Policy Change

- Language to review and update the food package every 10 years
- The establishment of the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program
- Mandate to get all states to EBT by 2020
- The establishment of the use of adjunctive eligibility in WIC
- Language that establishes funding levels for set asides like the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program, MIS/EBT, and Infrastructure

NWA Reauthorization Asks: General

Rename WIC to the
Special
Supplemental Public
Health Nutrition
Program for Women
Infants and
Children.

*

Assure adequate
Nutrition Services
(NSA) funding.

*

Protect and preserve
adjunctive eligibility.



NWA Reauthorization Asks: Eligibility

Giving states the option to certify infants for two years.

*

Giving states the option to increase the certification timeframe for both breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding women to two years post-partum.

*

Extending eligibility for children to age six.



NWA Reauthorization Asks: MIS/EBT

Enhance service delivery through information technology by providing \$35 million in unencumbered funding outside the regular NSA grant to implement MIS core functions

*

Move WIC to electronic benefit service delivery by 2020 by providing at least \$50 million per year.

*

Protect WIC's limited technology resources by amending current law to clarify that WIC is not expected to pick up the on-going costs of communications lines, processing fees, maintenance, and new and replacement equipment costs, and further that where an authorized vendor accepts both SNAP and WIC benefits that the vendor assume the incremental costs for EBT.



NWA Reauthorization Asks: Breastfeeding

Protect and support
breastfeeding in WIC by:

*

Emphasizing the
importance of
breastfeeding in WIC
with the addition of
“breastfeeding support
and promotion” to each
citation related to WIC
for nutrition education
in the Child Nutrition
Act of 1966.

*

Enhancing the successful
breastfeeding peer
counselor initiative by
increasing the authorized
level to \$180 million per
year.



NWA Reauthorization Asks: Cost Containment

Protect WIC cost containment by:

*

Preserving the integrity of infant formula cost containment.

*

Assuring the continued viability of the highly successful infant formula cost containment system by allowing state WIC agencies the option to form contracting alliances without limits on the number of participants.



NWA Reauthorization Asks: Infrastructure and Research

Improve WIC infrastructure by increasing the authorized amount from \$14 million to \$40 million per year and assure that it is unencumbered.

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Provide \$15 million per year to support updated, rigorous health outcomes research and evaluation, documenting WIC's continued success.

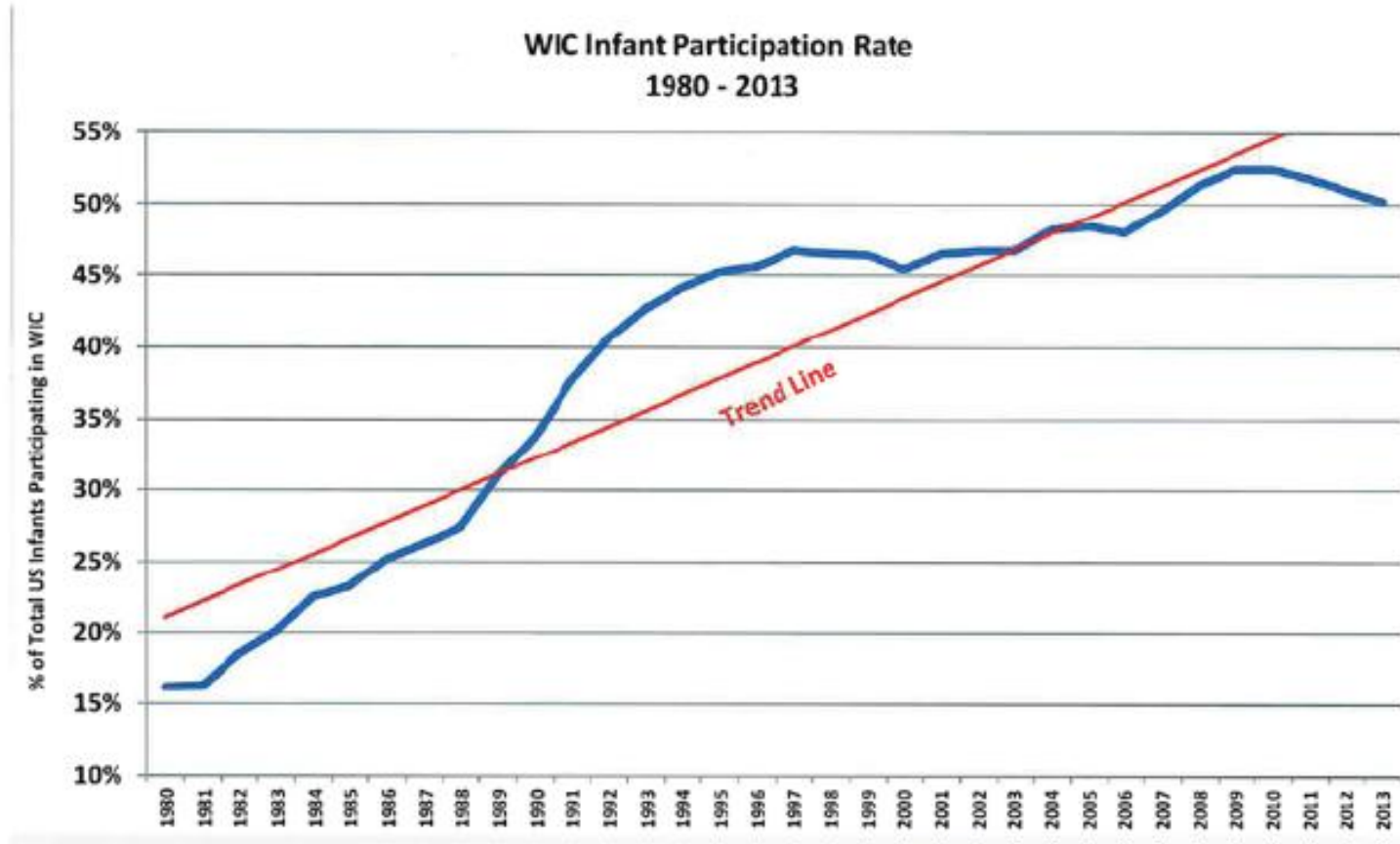


Reauthorization Challenge: Adjunctive Eligibility

- Adjunctive eligibility: automatic enrollment in WIC with proof of participation in SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid
- Links prevention to healthcare
- Streamlines admin
- Some states have Medicaid eligibility above 185% of poverty, the WIC eligibility level
- Formula company is lobbying to cap adjunctive eligibility
 - Want people to pay full price for formula to increase revenues
 - Are spinning WIC data

Mead Johnson claim

WIC Enrollment is on an Unsustainable Path



MJN Confidential and Proprietary Information

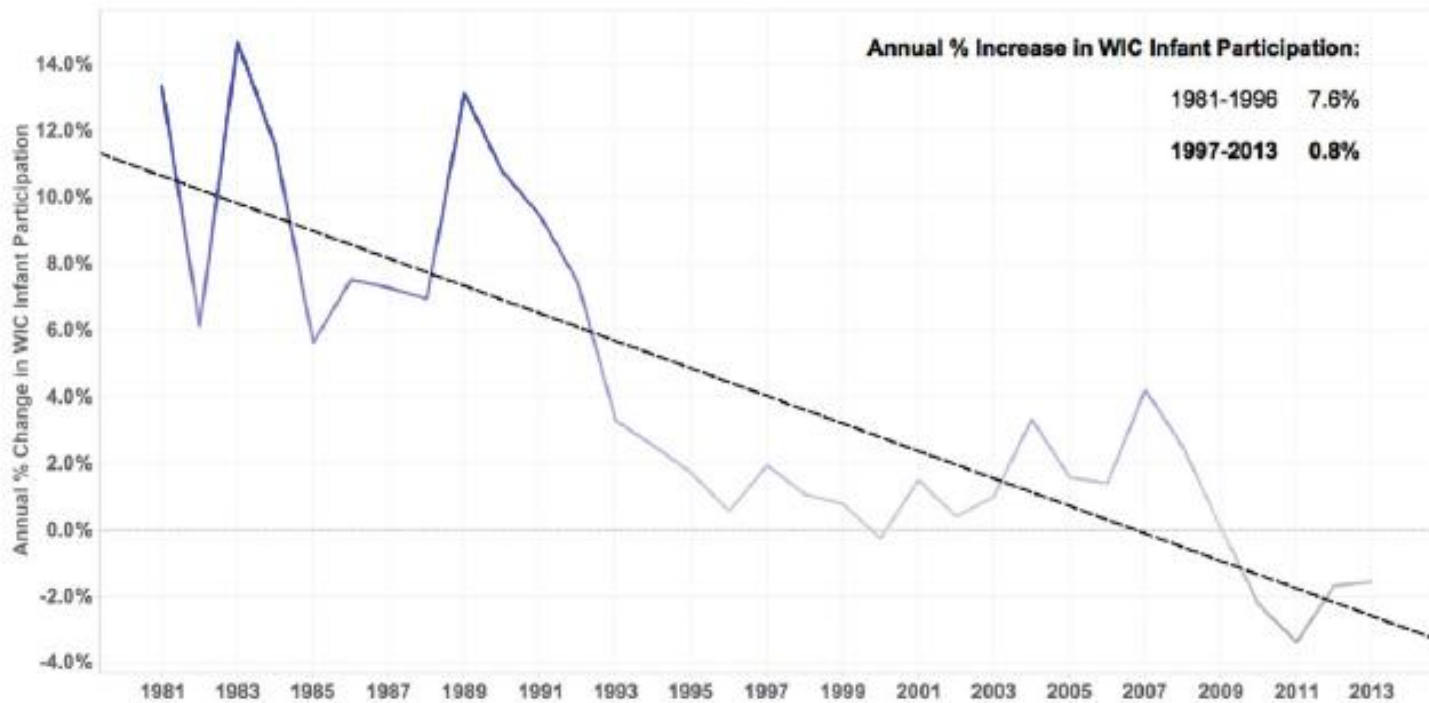
Source: USDA FNS WIC enrollment data at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ipd/wic-program> and Centers for Disease Control & Prevention birth data at <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm>

Reality

WIC Enrollment is Sustainable

Annual Growth in WIC Infant Participation is Decreasing

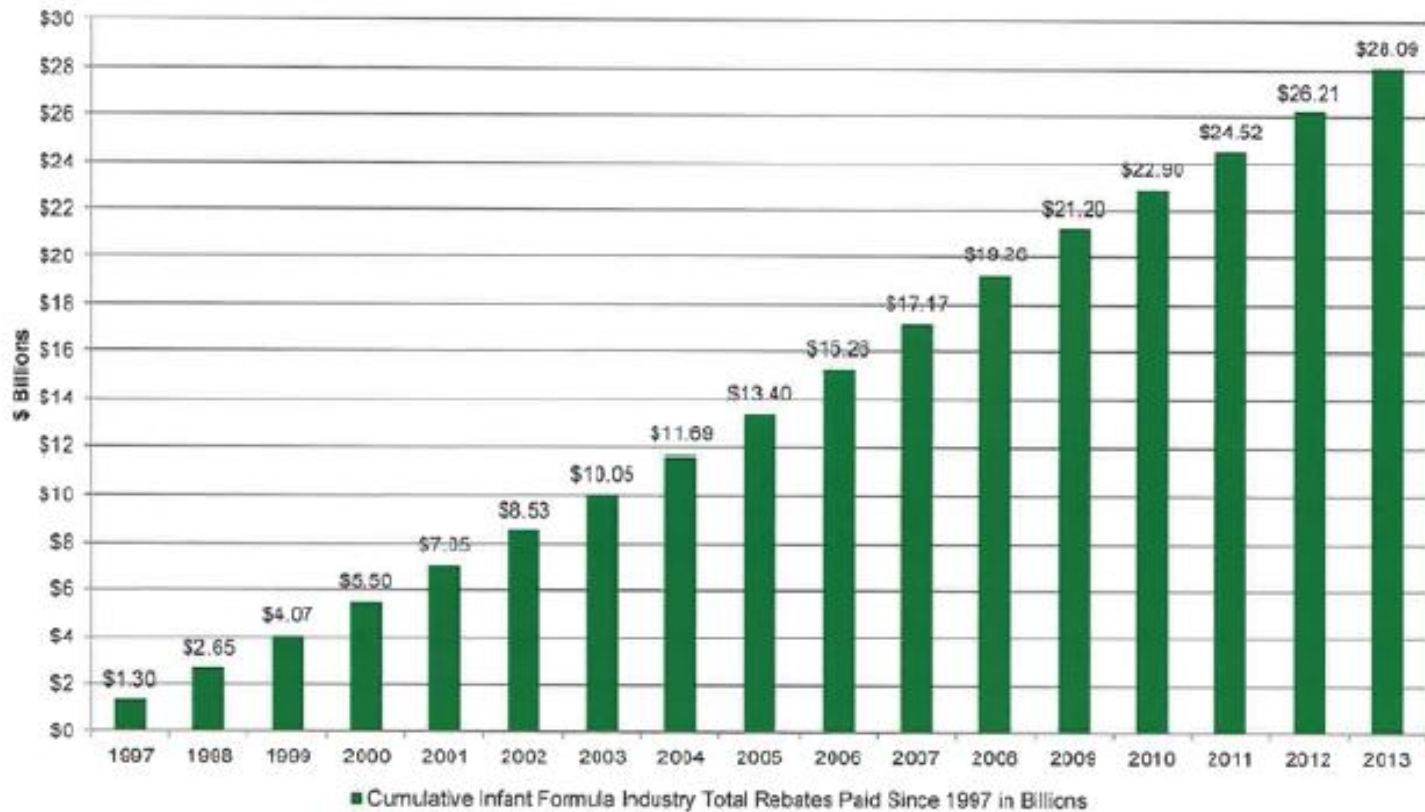
WIC Infant Participation - Annual Growth %, 1981-2013



Source: USDA Economic Research Service, Average Monthly Participation in WIC, Fiscal Year 1980-2013. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/wic-program/tables.aspx#monthly>

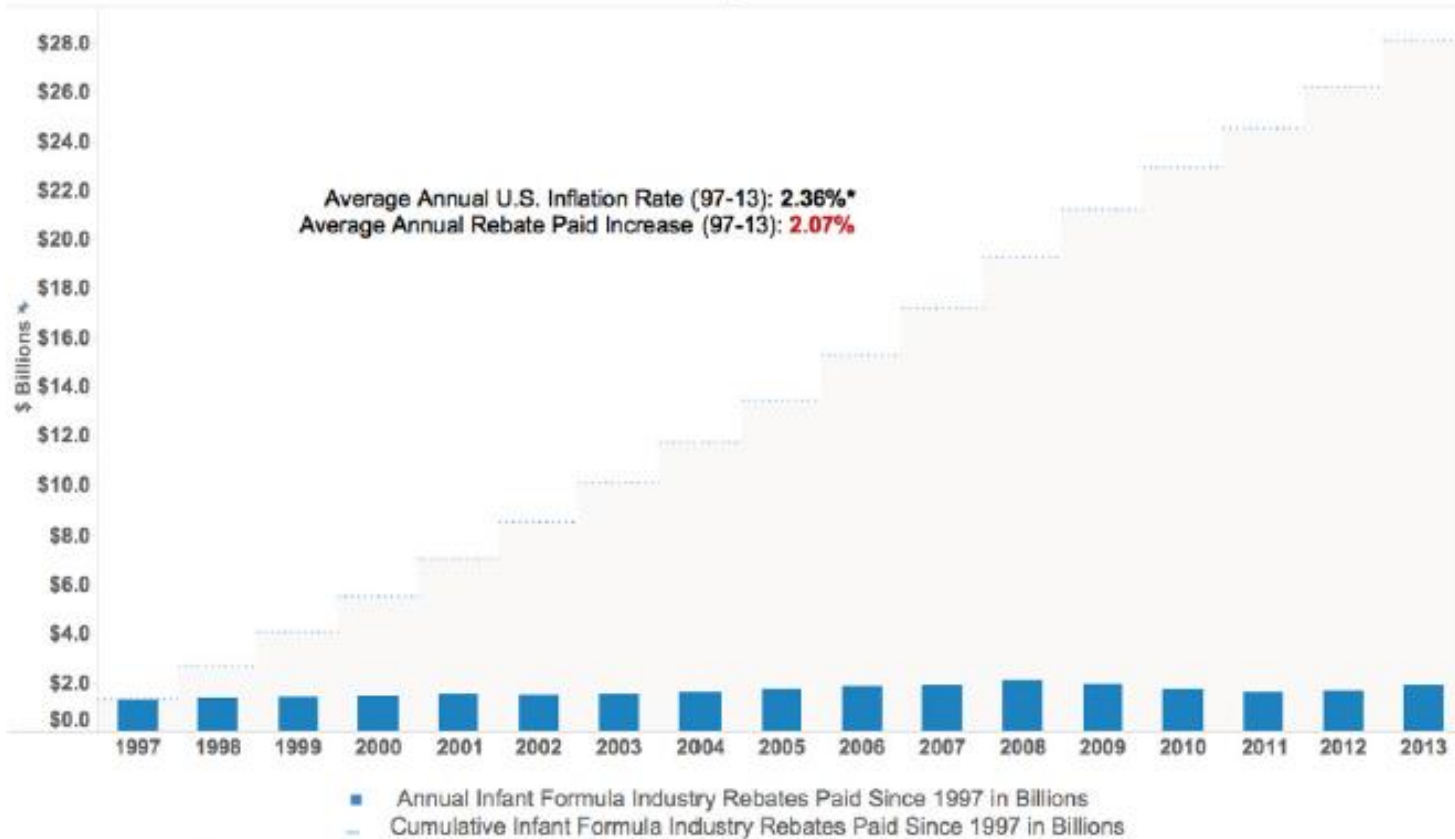
Mead Johnson claim

Infant Formula Industry Total Rebates Paid



Reality

Infant Formula Industry - Annual Rebates Paid



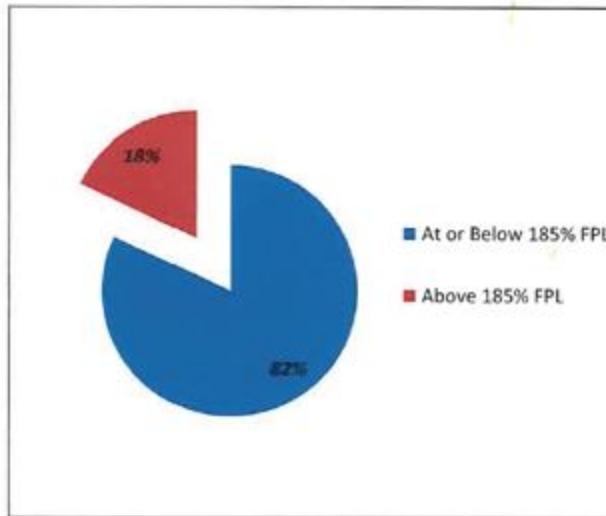
Source: Mead Johnson, Infant Formula Industry Total Rebates Paid, Washington DC Congressional Meetings, December 2014

*Source: The World Bank, Inflation & Consumer Prices, United States <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FP.CPI.TOTL.ZG>

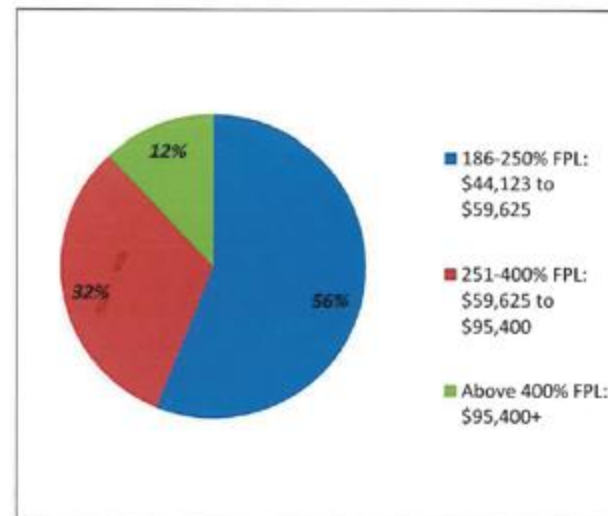
Mead Johnson claim

WIC Infant Family Income Characteristics

WIC Infants by Income Status:
% of Federal Poverty Level

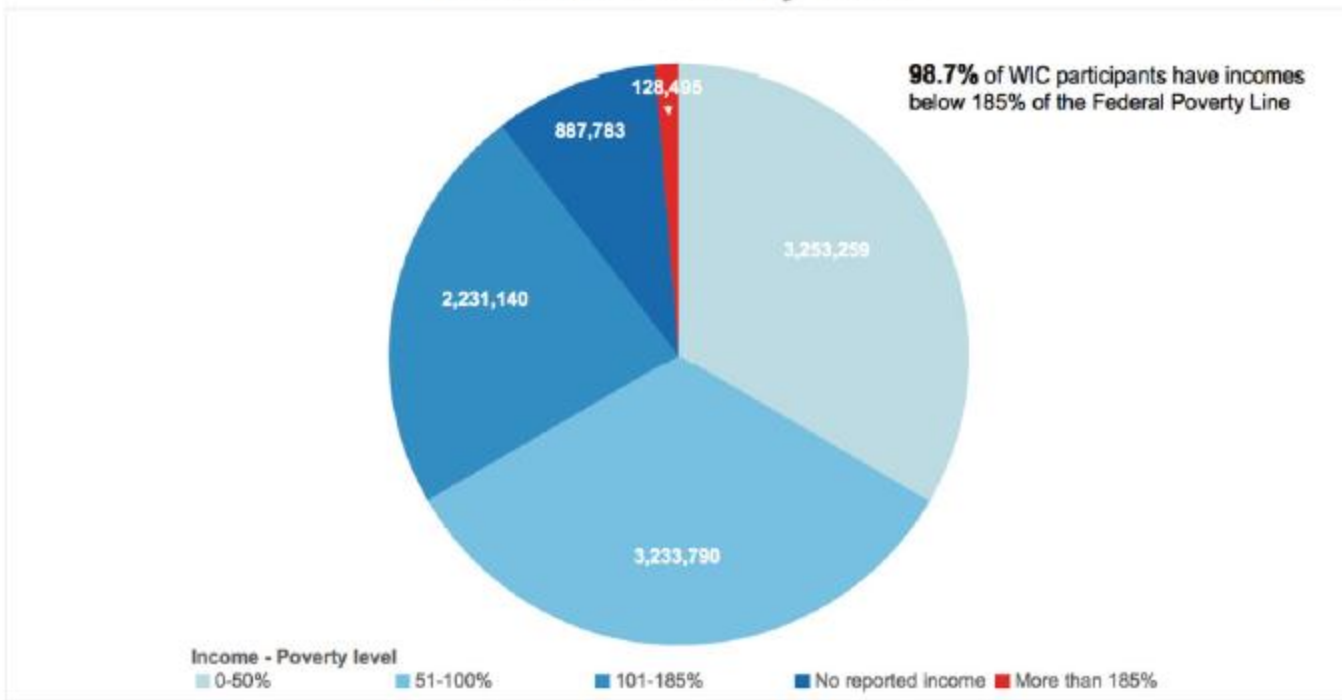


WIC Infants Above Income
Threshold



Reality

Number of Total WIC Participants Above & Below the Federal Poverty Line



Source: USDA Economic Research Service, WIC Participant & Program Characteristics (see Table III.6) <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/WICPC2012.pdf>

Reauthorization Challenge: Immigration

- Immigration reform discussions happening
- WIC does not document immigration status
- Could have federal legislation that forces WIC to do so
- Stay tuned for the WIC and Immigration presentations later today for more information!

Reauthorization Challenge: General Eligibility Cuts

- “Focusing” WIC on the most vulnerable
 - Infants
 - Lowest income

Reauthorization Outlook: It is going
to be a fight!

WIC Food Packages

WIC Food Packages

- Regulatory process
- Reviewed every 10 years
- USDA seeks recommendations from 3rd party scientific body, the Institute of Medicine (IOM)
- At the beginning of the IOM review process:
 - Potato report deems potatoes okay in WIC
 - Meeting later this week

Food Package Challenge: Legislative Mandates

- Potato precedent
- Threat: future legislative mandates/compromised scientific integrity
- Policy vehicles: Appropriations and Reauthorization bills

Advocacy

It becomes increasingly important to tell the WIC story to policymakers!



National WIC Association
WIC for a Healthier America



Advocacy vs. Lobbying

As the nation's premier public health nutrition program, WIC is a cost-effective, sound investment—insuring the health of our children.

NWA'S MISSION
NWA Inspires and empowers the WIC community to advocate for and promote quality nutrition services for all eligible mothers and young children, and assure effective management of WIC.

Advocacy

Advocacy refers to speaking out on issues or supporting a proposal or a cause.

Lobbying

Lobbying is one type of advocacy legally defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS defines two types of lobbying - direct lobbying and grassroots lobbying.

Direct Lobbying

A direct lobbying communication is any attempt to influence legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or any other government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation through communication that refers to specific legislation and reflects a view on that legislation.

Grassroots Lobbying

A grassroots lobbying communication is any effort to influence legislation by attempting to affect the opinions of the general public or any segment of the public through communication that refers to specific legislation, reflects a view on that legislation, and encourages the recipient to contact a legislator, employee of a legislative body, or any other government official or employee about the legislation.

Examples of Direct Lobbying	Examples of Grassroots Lobbying
Emailing a member of Congress to vote yes on H.R. 2112 while on paid work time	Sending an action alert to a listserv to encourage them to email their Congressmen and telling them to vote yes on H.R. 2112
If a bill is introduced that contains a provision that cuts WIC funding, speaking out against that funding cut measure to a Congressional staff member	If a bill is introduced that contains a provision that cuts WIC funding, telling people in your email address book to speak out against that funding cut measure to a Congressional staff member
Telling a member of Congress to support the President's budget proposal for WIC	Requesting friends and colleagues to urge a Member of Congress to support the President's budget proposal for WIC

Advocacy vs. Lobbying

Advocacy

- Advocacy refers to speaking out on issues or supporting a proposal or cause.

Lobbying

- **Lobbying is one type of advocacy** legally defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- A lobbying communication:
 - Refers to **specific legislation or measures** in a piece of legislation
 - **Reflects a view** on that legislation, and
 - **Involves a communication** with any member or employee of a legislative body or any other government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation (direct lobbying) **OR encourages the recipient to contact** a legislator, employee of a legislative body, or any other government official or employee (grassroots lobbying)

Non-lobbying Advocacy

- **Educating** the public and members of Congress about WIC
- **Highlighting** the achievements of WIC clinics in the media
- **Hosting** events that promote, celebrate, or inform about WIC

Activity: Lobbying vs. Advocacy

- The House is voting on a budget bill that would harm WIC, so you call your Congressman and tell him to vote against the bill.
- You get an NWA action alert to sign a letter stating the benefits of WIC, so you click to email your member of Congress.
- You do an interview with the local radio station on how funding shortfalls are influencing client services.
- You host your district's member of Congress at the clinic, explaining all the wonderful aspects of WIC. The Congresswoman ends up talking with a WIC client who is aware of a bill to cut funding for WIC. The client expresses her disapproval.
- There's a bill to restore funding to WIC, so you tell your friends to call their Congressmen and request support of the bill.

You are Permitted and Encouraged to Lobby

- It is your democratic right
- Each state has specific laws for state employees about lobbying efforts while on the job
- Private money can be used on lobbying, federal funds generally cannot
- If you are confused..
 - Limit lobbying efforts to coffee breaks, lunch breaks, after hours and other times not considered “work time”
 - Focus your time on educating about the value of WIC

During NWA's Leadership Conference
you will be
educating and
doing non-lobbying advocacy.



Now more than ever, we need your voice for
WIC families!

Questions? Comments?