



National WIC Association

The State of WIC: WIC Policy Overview and Current Issues

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National WIC Association

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National WIC Association

2017 Washington Leadership Conference

Session Outline

- Importance of WIC Policy
- 4 Main Policy Areas
- WIC Appropriations Overview and Update
- WIC Reauthorization Overview and Update
- WIC Food Packages Overview and Update
- P-24 Dietary Guidelines
- Policy Priorities
- Advocacy vs. Lobbying

We know why WIC is important...

- Serves about 7.6 million participants across the US
 - > 50% of infants born in the US are enrolled in WIC
- Provides 4 core services: nutrition education, breastfeeding support, healthy food package, and referrals to health and social services
 - 10,000 WIC clinics nationwide
- Health outcomes—Participation in WIC:
 - Reduces likelihood of adverse birth outcomes including

- VLBW babies and pre-term births
- Increases breastfeeding initiation and duration rates
- Leads to healthier diets and lower food insecurity
- Leads to better dental health, higher immunization rates, and better cognitive outcomes in children
- Can reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect



Changes to WIC policy can help or hinder your ability to help clients achieve their goals.

A faint, light-colored illustration of a woman holding a child is visible in the background on the left side of the slide. The woman is shown in profile, facing right, with her arms around the child. The child is also in profile, facing right, and appears to be holding the woman's hand. The illustration is composed of simple, rounded shapes and is rendered in a light pink or red color.

3 Main Policy Areas

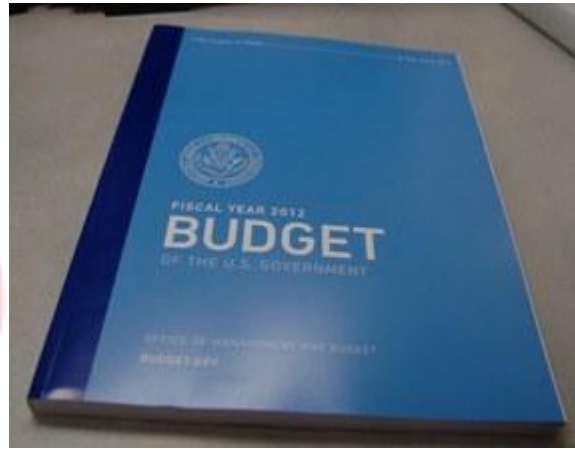
1. Appropriations (legislative)
2. Reauthorization (legislative)



USDA



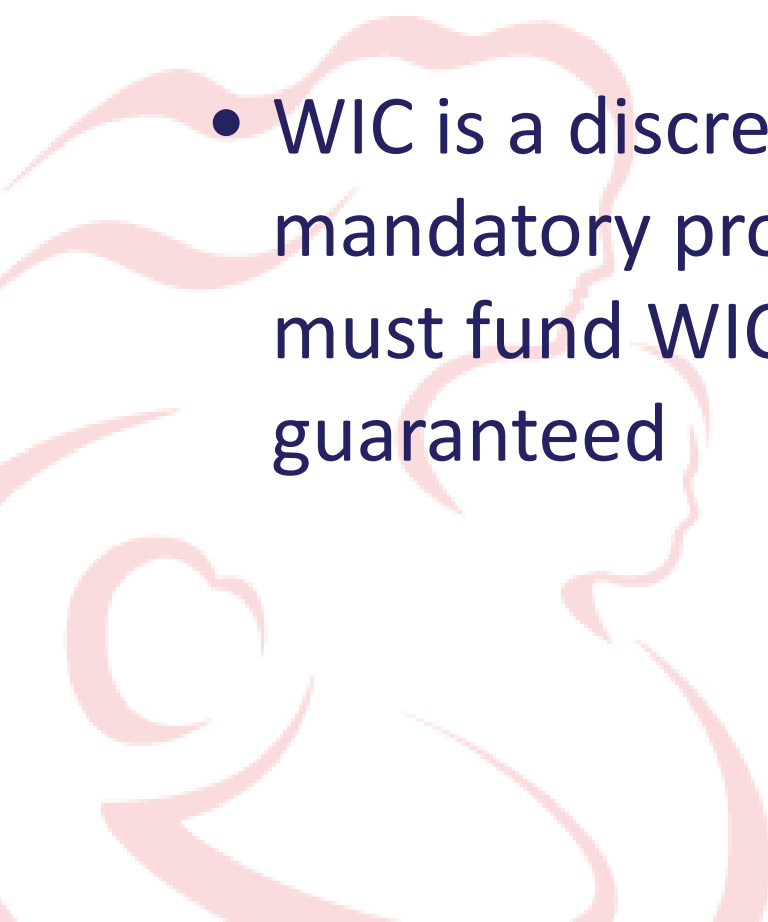
3. Food Package
(regulatory)



WIC Appropriations



WIC Appropriations

- Also known as “WIC Funding”
 - WIC is a discretionary program (unlike mandatory programs), meaning Congress must fund WIC each year and funding is not guaranteed
- 

Committees of Jurisdiction

- Committees with the power to fund or not fund WIC
- House Appropriations Committee; Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, & FDA
- Senate Appropriations Committees; Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, & FDA

Committee Leadership

House

- Robert Aderholt (R-AL),
Chair, Subcommittee
- Sanford Bishop (D-GA),
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee
- Rodney Frelinghuysen
(R-NJ), Chair, Full
Committee
- Nita Lowey (D-NY),
Ranking Member, Full
Committee

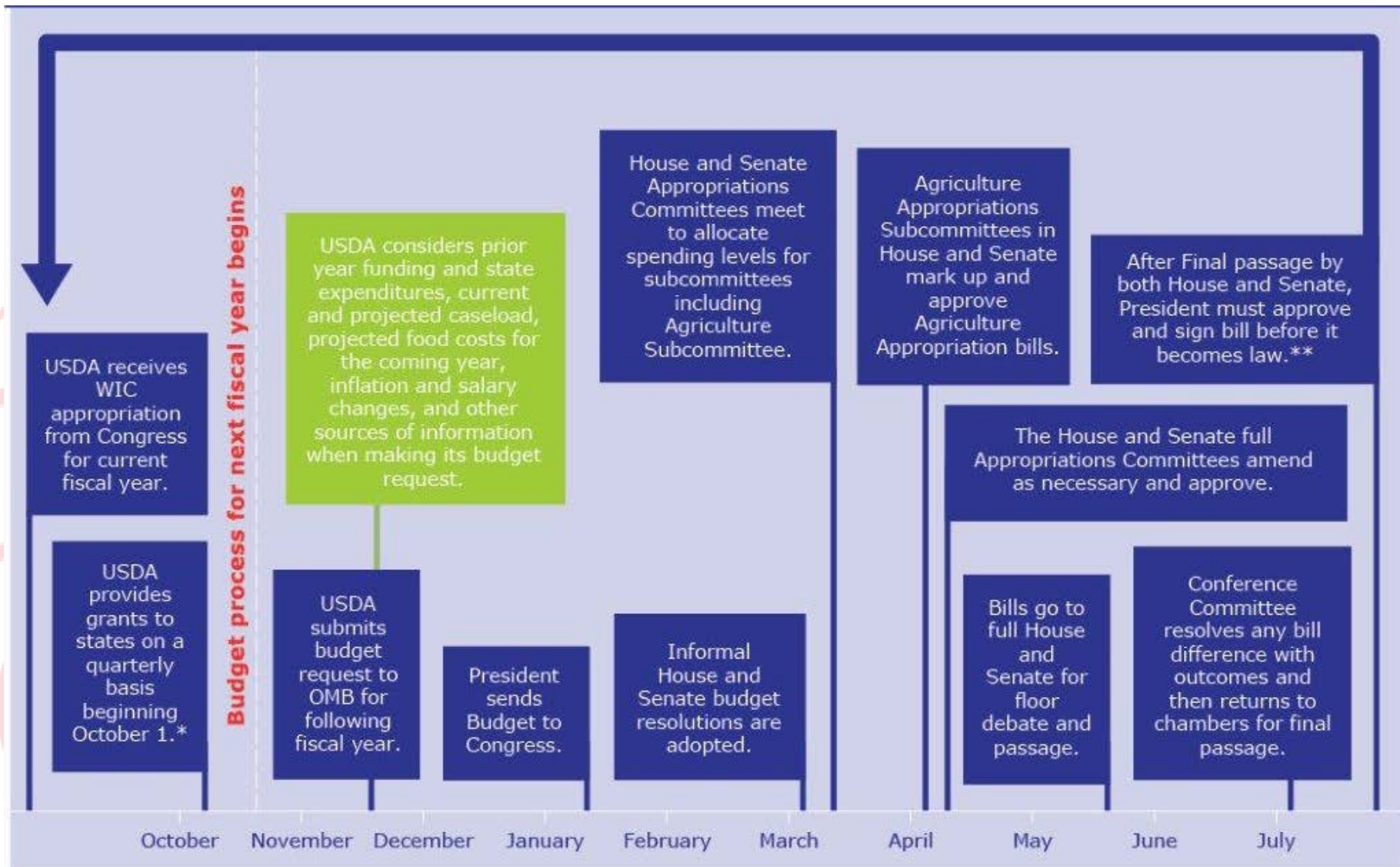
Senate

- John Hoeven (R-ND),
Chair, Subcommittee
- Jeffrey Merkley (D-OR),
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee
- Thad Cochran (R-MS),
Chair, Full Committee
- Patrick Leahy (D-VT),
Ranking Member, Full
Committee



**We want them to know about how
great WIC is and make them our best
friends.**

Steps in the Appropriations Process



Continuing Resolutions

- If budget process is not complete by October 1, Congress may enact one or more continuing resolutions (CRs)
- Short-term funding to avoid a government shutdown
- CRs provide funding at the same level as the previous fiscal year and can last varying lengths of time (from a few weeks to a full year).
- CRs make program planning challenging

Today's **WORD**

continuing resolution

/ kuh n-tin-yoo-ing rez-uh-loo-shun /

noun

: short-term legislation passed by Congress to keep the government open.



eating and health

Shutdown Leaves Program Feeding Women And Infants In Lurch

by ELIZA BARCLAY AND ALLISON AUBREY

October 01, 2013 3:49 PM

While CRs are not ideal, they are better than letting the government shutdown.

Shutdown threatens nutrition for mothers, children

CNNMoney

By Steve Hargreaves @hargreavesCNN October 1, 2013: 9:37 AM ET

Government shutdown could soon have impact on family WIC program in Cuyahoga County

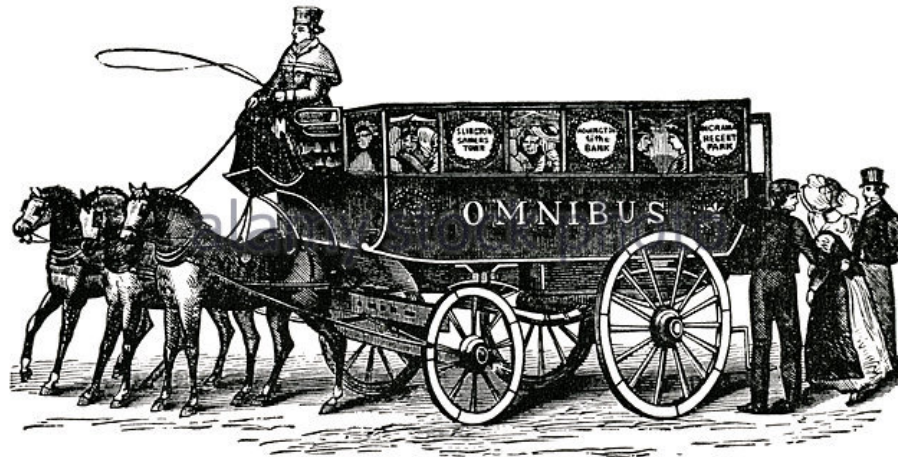
WIC program for women, children could soon be hurt

BY: Joe Pagonakis, newsnet5.com

POSTED: 4:16 PM, Oct 8, 2013

UPDATED: 11:08 AM, Oct 9, 2013

Omnibus/Minibus Bills



www.alamy.com - ETBHCN

- Facing a legislative time crunch (like the end of a fiscal year), Congress will often choose to wrap some or all unapproved appropriations bills into a single legislative vehicle to assure passage. A “minibus” is where two or more appropriations bills are wrapped, and an “omnibus” is where all or all remaining unapproved appropriations bills are wrapped.

WIC Appropriations – Where Are We Now?

- FY 2018: We are on our 5th CR – expires March 23
- 2 government shutdowns so far during the FY18 process
- Congress expected to pass an omnibus in March
- Could see another short-term shutdown if Congress does not move quickly
- Bill needs to get to the floor one week before 3/23 deadline

Some Good Appropriations News

- NWA secured \$14 million in supplemental disaster appropriations for PR & USVI
- Thank you to all who reached out to Congress about this!
- Remember: there are ALWAYS opportunities for wins even in the most challenging political environment
- NWA will honor Senator Kirsten Gillibrand with a Leadership Award to thank her for her work on this

WIC Appropriations

	FY2017 Appropriation	FY2018 Senate Bill	FY19 President's Budget
Total Budget Authority	\$6.35 billion	\$6.35 billion	\$5.75 billion
Rescission	\$850 million	\$800 million	\$215 million
Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program	\$60 million	\$80 million	\$60 million
Infrastructure	\$14 million	\$14 million	\$14 million
Program Initiatives & Evaluation	\$15 million	Presumptive \$15 million	\$5 million
Rescission of Unspent Funds	\$850 million	\$800 million	\$215 million

NWA FY 2019 Appropriations Asks

REQUEST	AMOUNT
Total Funding Request	\$6.3 Billion + Contingency Fund
Set Aside for Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program	\$90 Million
Set Aside for WIC Infrastructure	\$14 Million
Set Aside for WIC Research and Evaluation	\$25 Million
Set Aside for Addressing Maternal and Infant Mortality	\$5 Million
Set Aside for Community Health Integration	\$15 Million
Maintain the Contingency Fund at \$250 Million	Up to \$250 Million

FY 2019 Funding Outlook

- President's budget claims to provide adequate funding for caseload
 - Low caseload estimate: 6.9 million
- Further rescissions likely – concern about continued decrease in funding & squeeze on NSA funds
- Good news: budget deal provided more top line funding for FY18 & FY19
 - However, most \$\$ likely to go to defense & border security

WIC Reauthorization



WIC Reauthorization

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

Committee Leadership

House: Education and the Workforce

- Todd Rokita (R-IN), Chair, Subcommittee
- Jared Polis (D-CO), Ranking Member, Subcommittee
- Virginia Foxx (R-NC), Chair, Full Committee
- Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA), Ranking Member, Full Committee

Senate: Agriculture

- David Perdue (R-GA), Chair, Subcommittee
- Bob Casey (D-PA), Ranking Member, Subcommittee
- Pat Roberts (R-KS), Chair, Full Committee
- Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Ranking Member, Full Committee



**We also want them to know about
how great WIC is and make them our
best friends.**

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

2015 Reauthorization Process:

- House and Senate Committees missed original deadline (September 30, 2015)
- Senate Agriculture Committee passed bipartisan bill in January 2016
 - Contained several positive WIC provisions including WIC to Six, 2 year infant certifications, and protecting adjunctive eligibility with a 3 year study
- House Ed and Workforce Committee passed partisan bill in April 2016
 - Bad for WIC and other child nutrition programs; no positive WIC provisions
- Neither bill passed in the full chamber
- Nothing happened in 2017
- Now, unlikely that CNR will be taken up in 2018 due to other competing legislative priorities in these committees

A faint, light-colored graphic of a woman's profile is visible in the background on the left side of the slide. The profile is facing right and is rendered in a soft, pinkish-red hue. It appears to be a stylized or artistic representation of a woman's face and hair.

**Lack of reauthorization bill leaves
WIC more vulnerable to legislative
threats like Appropriations riders
and structural changes**

Big Threats to Benefit Programs

- Block grants & “super waivers” remain a threat
- Administration & Congress have signaled interest in ~~welfare reform~~ **CUTTING & LIMITING ACCESS TO BENEFIT PROGRAMS**
 - A.k.a. Speaker Ryan’s “workforce development”
 - Possible House bill

Public Charge & Immigration Situation

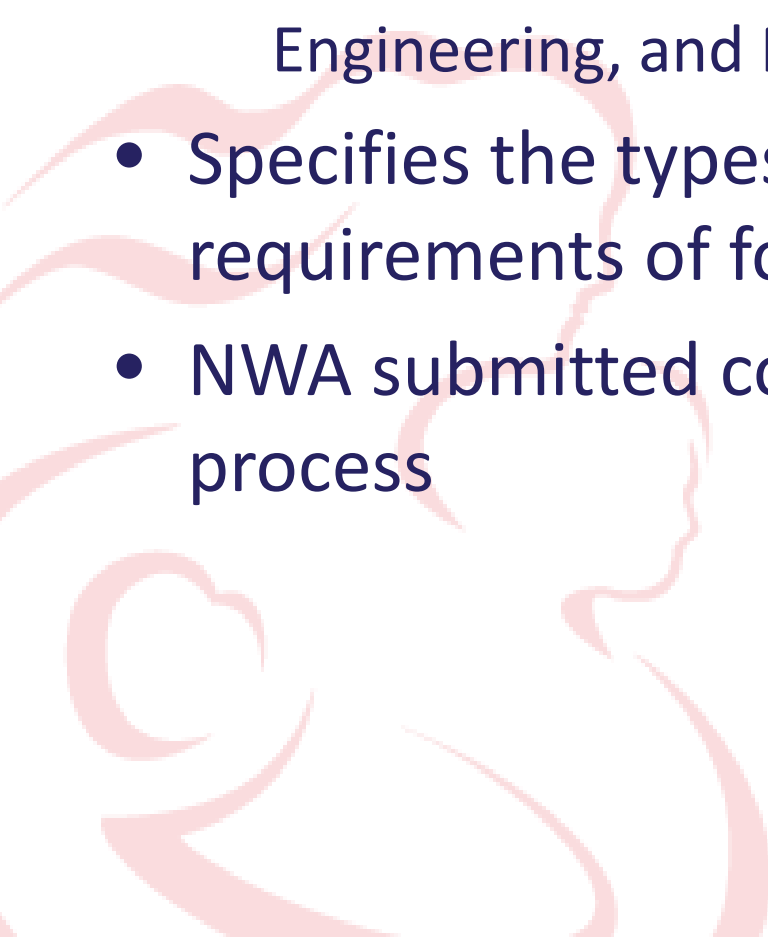
- Draft Notice of Proposed Rulemaking leaked last month
 - Very similar to leaked EO this time last year
 - Public charge = Someone likely to be dependent on government for survival and for that reason is subject to deportation
 - Expands definition of public charge to health and nutrition programs
 - **WIC is specifically called out this time**
- Nothing is law yet!
- But, the chilling effect is real & being felt now
- We will have a session dedicated to this topic later today



WIC Food Packages




Food Package Review Process

- The review process is scientifically based
 - USDA commissions National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
 - Specifies the types and minimum nutritional requirements of foods in the WIC food package
 - NWA submitted comments throughout the process
- 

Food Package Review Process: Where are We Now?

- NASEM released its report in Jan. 2017
- USDA still reviewing recommendations
 - No requirement to act
- Danger in action under this administration – could roll back progress
- Congressional threats

THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES PRESS

This PDF is available at <http://www.nap.edu/23655> SHARE    



Review of WIC Food Packages: Improving Balance and Choice:
Final Report

DETAILS

1200 pages | 6 x 9 | PAPERBACK
ISBN 978-0-309-45016-4 | DOI: 10.17226/23655

AUTHORS

Committee to Review WIC Food Packages; Food and Nutrition Board, Health and Medicine Division, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

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Steps Still Left in the USDA Rule-Making Process

- USDA will publish interim rule and accept public comments
- USDA will responds to all public comments and make any changes to food packages rule, considering comments
- USDA will publish interim final rule and accept public comment
- USDA will respond to all public comments and makes any changes to food packages rule, considering comments
- USDA will publish final rule

Pregnancy – 24 months Dietary Guidelines


- Due in 2020
- Unclear process
- Public comment periods coming up for scope & composition of the committee
 - NWA will submit comments & nominations
- Process expected to be fraught politically
- Issues with resources & staff
 - NWA is requesting appropriations

NWA Legislative Priorities

- **First and foremost, protecting WIC from funding cuts and structural changes**
- Also urging policy makers to:
 - Protect and Strengthen WIC's Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program
 - Protect and Preserve the Scientific Integrity of the WIC Food Packages
 - Support WIC Research & Evaluation
 - Support WIC's Transition to Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) in all 90 "states"

**Refer to Fact
Sheets: FY19
WIC Policy
Priorities +
WIC 2018
Nutrition and
Public Health
Priorities**

Lifting Up Your WIC Voice

- It is essential given our current environment that we all work together to strengthen WIC & protect it from potential threats
 - Policymakers need to learn from their constituents about the value of WIC
- 

Advocacy vs. Lobbying



Key Aspect of Being a Good Advocate: Staying Informed

- Weekly Legislative Updates in NWA's Monday Morning Report
 - All Legislative Updates are posted on NWA's blog to get up to speed on the latest issues
- Washington Updates



National WIC Association

NWA is the non-profit education arm and advocacy voice of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).



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WASHINGTON
UPDATE

Weekly WIC Policy Update

February 9, 2015

2016 Budget Update: House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY) has scheduled several hearings this week on President Obama's FY 2016 budget request. Hearings on the president's budget will also take place before other committees in the House and Senate this week.

Affordable Care Act Update: Last week, the House passed H.R. 596 by a vote of 239-186. H.R. 596, if enacted, would repeal the 2010 Affordable Care Act and direct three House committees to draft replacement legislation. Senate Majority

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Stay tuned for more presentations and workshops on how to be a strong WIC advocate

- Later Today:
 - Immigration & WIC Session
 - WIC State Policy Panel Discussion
 - Being a WIC Spokesperson Workshop
- Tomorrow:
 - Federal Budget Update
 - WIC Advocacy Best Practices & Lessons Learned
 - Policies that Impact WIC: An Update on Hunger, Nutrition, Breastfeeding, and Healthcare
 - Threats to the Safety Net



Questions? Comments?