

# WIC POLICY 101: POLICY- MAKING PROCESS AND CURRENT ISSUES

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# AT ITS CORE, WIC IS ABOUT CHANGING BEHAVIOR AND IMPROVING HEALTH

Nutrition Education

\*

Breastfeeding  
Education and  
Support

\*

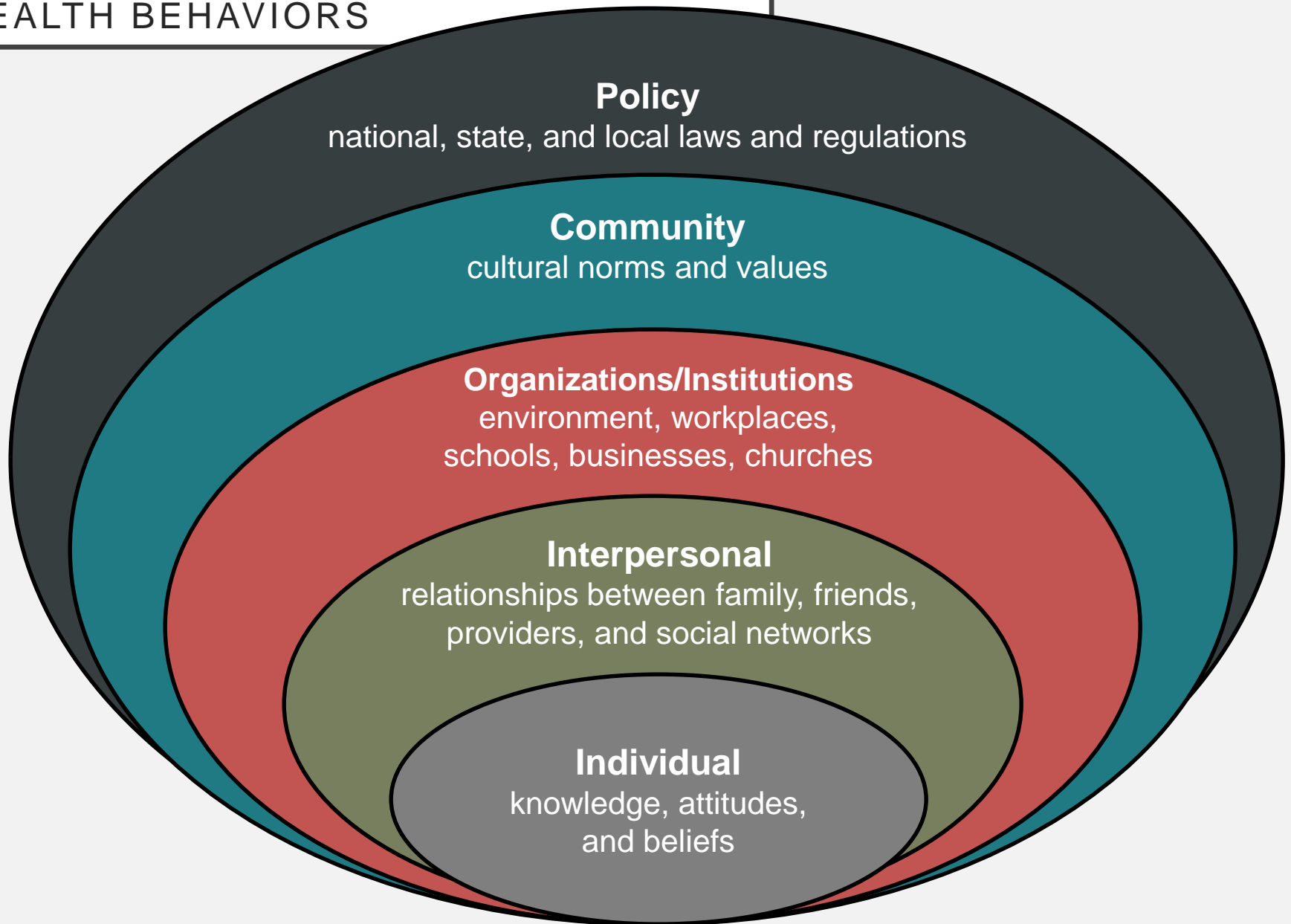
Referrals to  
Healthcare and  
Social Services

\*

Healthy Foods



**SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL MODEL:**  
SPHERES OF INFLUENCES ON  
HEALTH BEHAVIORS



CHANGES TO WIC POLICY CAN HELP  
OR HINDER YOUR ABILITY TO HELP  
CLIENTS ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.

## 3 MAIN POLICY AREAS

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

# WIC APPROPRIATIONS



# WIC APPROPRIATIONS

- Also known as “WIC Funding”
- WIC is a discretionary program
- Congress must fund WIC each year
- Funding is not guaranteed

WHY IS THE YEARLY WIC APPROPRIATIONS  
PROCESS IMPORTANT?



## 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
- Sam Farr (D-CA), Ranking  
Member, Subcommittee
- Harold Rogers (R-KY),  
Chair, Full Committee
- Nita Lowey (D-NY),  
Ranking Member, Full  
Committee

## SENATE

- Jerry Moran (R-KS), Chair,  
Subcommittee
- Jeffrey Merkley (D-OR),  
Ranking Member,  
Subcommittee
- Thad Cochran (R-MS),  
Chair, Full Committee
- Barbara Mikulski (D-MD),  
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

- President's Budget Request <---currently here in the process
- Congress's Budget Resolution or Not and the **302 (a)**
- House and Senate Appropriations Committees determine Subcommittee allocations **302 (b)s**

## STEPS IN THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

- House and Senate Agriculture, Rural Development, and FDA **Subcommittee markup** their versions of the bill, including the WIC program allocation
  - **Vote** by Subcommittee
- If passed by Subcommittees, **Full Appropriations Committees markup** their versions of the bill, including the WIC program allocation
  - **Vote** by Full Committee

## STEPS IN THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

- If passed by Full Committee, **House and Senate floor debate** and amendment on their versions of the bills
  - **Vote** by House and Senate  
on the different versions of the bill

## STEPS IN THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

- If both versions of bill are passed, a **Conference Committee** is formed
- Conference Committee **irons out differences** between 2 versions of the bill
  - **Vote** by House and Senate on same conferenced bill
- If passed by House and Senate, bill goes to **President Obama** for **signature or veto**

## APPROPRIATIONS CHALLENGES OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS

- Threats of funding cuts
- Funding uncertainty with numerous Continuing Resolutions
- The government shutdown



## CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS (CRS)

- If Congress cannot agree on funding levels for government programs in the coming year, they may enact a Continuing Resolution (CR)
- Short-term funding to avoid a government shutdown
- Short-term funding makes program planning challenging

the salt WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE

eating and health foodways producers food for thought for foodies

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

CNN Money

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

# WIC APPROPRIATIONS

## FY2016 LAW

- \$6.35 billion in new funding
  - \$60 million: breastfeeding peer counselor program
  - \$13.6 million: infrastructure
- \$220 million from unobligated balances (carryover): MIS/EBT (eWIC)

## FY 2017 PRESIDENT'S REQUEST

- \$6.35 billion new funds
  - \$80 million: breastfeeding peer counselor program
  - \$75 million: MIS/EBT (eWIC)
  - \$14 million: infrastructure
  - \$26 million: program initiatives and evaluation

# NWA FY 2017 APPROPRIATIONS ASKS

NWA ASKS FOR  
MORE INVESTMENT  
IN WIC!

- \$6.366 million/ funding to meet all caseload needs
  - \$90 million: breastfeeding peer counselor program
  - \$75 million: MIS/EBT (eWIC) \$14 million: Infrastructure
  - \$14 million: infrastructure
  - \$26 million: Program Initiatives and Evaluation with \$5 million for rigorous research
  - \$6.02 million for enhanced breastfeeding CVV
- Maintain contingency fund at \$150 million

## FY2017 FUNDING OUTLOOK

- **WIC funding for FY2017 will likely be sufficient**
  - Lower caseloads mean less money needed
  - The budget deal last year allows for decent overall funding caps for Congress to work with
- **But, it's not time to be complacent**
  - There are no guarantees
  - Each year through FY2021, the overall funding allocation for Congress to fund all government programs is scheduled to decrease
  - WIC is prime for cuts as the largest program for the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee

# 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
- Marcia L. Fudge (D-OH), Ranking Member, Subcommittee
- John Kline (R-MN), Chair, Full Committee
- Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA), Ranking Member, Full Committee

## SENATE : AGRICULTURE

- John Hoeven (R-ND), Chair, Subcommittee
- Bob Casey (D-PA), Ranking Member, Subcommittee
- Pat Roberts (R-KS), Chair, Full Committee
- Debbie Stabenow (D-MD), 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

## STEPS IN THE REAUTHORIZATION PROCESS: SIMILAR TO APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS BUT WITH NEW COMMITTEES

- Hearings
- Marker bills introduced
- House Education and the Workforce Committee/Senate Agriculture Committee mark-ups of their respective bills
- House and Senate Floor Debate
- House and Senate vote on their versions of the bill
- Once passed, the bills are conferenced to iron out differences
- House and Senate vote on conferenced agreement
- If passed, bill is signed into law, or vetoed and returned for more work or an override.

# NWA REAUTHORIZATION ASKS: ELIGIBILITY

Infant certification  
for 2 years!

\*

Moms until 2 years  
post-partum!

\*

Children to 6 years  
old!



# NWA REAUTHORIZATION ASKS: BREASTFEEDING

\$180 million per year  
for breastfeeding peer  
counselor program!

\*

Double the current  
amount!



## NWA REAUTHORIZATION ASKS: MIS/EBT

\$85 million for  
management  
information systems  
(MIS) and electronic  
benefit transfer  
(EBT)!



# NWA REAUTHORIZATION ASKS: FOOD PACKAGES

Keep food packages  
based on science and  
with choice!





# NWA REAUTHORIZATION ASKS: PROTECT ADJUNCTIVE ELIGIBILITY

Protect the link  
between WIC and  
Medicaid that  
reduces a barrier to  
participating in WIC  
for many vulnerable  
families!





# NWA REAUTHORIZATION ASKS: COST CONTAINMENT

Preserve the  
integrity of infant  
formula cost  
containment!



# NWA REAUTHORIZATION ASKS: INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESEARCH

\$40 million per year  
for infrastructure!

\*

\$15 million per year  
for rigorous health  
outcomes research!



## THE PROCESS SO FAR

### HOUSE

- Hearings
- Marker bills

### SENATE

- Hearings
- Marker bills
- Senate bill passed out of the Agriculture Committee with a bi-partisan vote

# WIC MARKER BILLS

## H.R. 2660: WISE INVESTMENT IN OUR CHILDREN (WIC) ACT

- Sponsored by Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA)
- Calls for giving states the option to extend WIC to 6 years old
- 71 Democrats co-sponsored the legislation

# WIC MARKER BILLS

## S. 1796: WISE INVESTMENT IN OUR CHILDREN (WIC) ACT

- Sponsored by Senator Bob Casey (D-PA)
- Calls for giving states the option to extend WIC to 6 years old
- Calls for giving states the option to certify infants for up to 2 years
- 5 co-sponsors: Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Patty Murray (D-WA), Barbara Boxer (D-CA)

## MAJOR THREAT THROUGHOUT!

- Eliminating or capping adjunctive eligibility

## SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE BILL

- Protects adjunctive eligibility and calls for a study about it
- Gives states the option to extend WIC to six years old for children not enrolled in full-day kindergarten
- Gives states the options to certify infants for 2 years with a less intensive check-in at 1 year
- Increased administrative responsibilities

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT BILL,  
CONSIDERING THE CURRENT  
POLITICAL CLIMATE!



WE EXPECT THE HOUSE BILL WILL  
BE LESS FAVORABLE FOR WIC, SO  
EDUCATING MEMBERS ABOUT THE  
VALUE OF WIC REMAINS  
IMPORTANT!

NWA WILL BE LOBBYING FOR  
THE SENATE BILL.

## WIC FOOD PACKAGES



## WIC FOOD PACKAGES

- Regulatory process
- Reviewed every 10 years
- USDA seeks recommendations from 3<sup>rd</sup> party scientific body, the Institute of Medicine (IOM)
- IOM is currently in the process of reviewing the WIC food packages

# FOOD PACKAGE RULE-MAKING PROCESS

- USDA begins rule-making process and reaches out to IOM for their expert recommendations
- IOM reviews food packages
- IOM releases report of its recommendations to USDA and the public
- USDA publishes interim rule and accepts public comments
- USDA responds to all public comments and makes any changes to food packages rule, considering comments
- USDA publishes interim final rule and accepts public comment
- USDA responds to all public comments and makes any changes to food packages rule, considering comments
- USDA publishes final rule
- Process repeats every 10 years

ESSENTIALLY, THERE ARE  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANYONE TO  
PROVIDE INPUT THROUGHOUT  
PROCESS.

FOOD PACKAGE CHALLENGE: CONGRESS  
DECIDING TO PUT WHATEVER THEY WANT  
IN THE FOOD PACKAGES RATHER THAN GO  
THROUGH THE RULE-MAKING PROCESS.

STAY TUNED FOR MORE ABOUT THE  
LATEST ON WIC FOOD PACKAGES  
PROCESS LATER IN THE CONFERENCE!



## 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.

## ACTIVITY: LOBBYING VS. ADVOCACY

- 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!



# KEEP INFORMED ABOUT WHERE CONGRESS IS IN THE PROCESS!

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



 **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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**NEWS & BLOG**

**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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