

FAMILIES CALL ON CONGRESS TO MAINTAIN WIC ACCESS TO FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides a targeted monthly benefit for healthy foods at critical times of growth and development. Recent proposals for fiscal year 2024 - working from a lower allocation for the Agriculture/FDA Subcommittee than last year - would slash WIC benefits and disrupt nearly 5 million participants' access to fruits and vegetables. The National WIC Association strongly urges Congress to provide adequate funding to maintain science-based produce benefits for WIC participants, ensuring a healthier start for the next generation.



"Having the increase in CVB from \$9 to \$25 is life saving. It may not seem like a lot to you, but I can purchase more and different types of healthy foods. With the increased support, I am able to introduce fresh and healthy produce to my family. **Lowering the fruit and vegetable benefit would take meals away from my son.** The added fruit and vegetable benefit truly helps, but cutting this benefit would definitely put a strain on my household."

- **Natasha Singh**
Woodbridge Township, New Jersey



"It would crush me. I rely on this assistance to keep my toddler on fresh fruits and vegetables. I am proud of how much he loves produce and feel that it is perhaps the healthiest part of his diet. With less money, I wouldn't be able to feed him as well."

- **Alex Spencer**
Ithaca, NY



"A pregnant mother not only needs to keep herself healthy, but now those nutrients are being used for the baby. And baby only relies on the mother. Keeping the fruit and vegetable money ensures that those who are less fortunate can keep supplementing their baby with what they need, making sure they have all the vitamins and nutrients that fruits and vegetables provide for both mom and baby."

- **Jasmine Gardea**
Canyon Country, California



"The increased fruit and vegetable benefit for WIC families has been life-changing. While it certainly helps with our monthly grocery budget, it also has allowed my daughter to taste, experiment with, and enjoy a broader range of fruits and vegetables. As pediatricians will tell you, it may take up to twenty times to present a type of food to your toddler before they try and like it. **Our family couldn't accomplish this without the additional fruit and vegetable dollars.** I urge you to do everything possible to keep this benefit at the current amounts to ensure families like ours can get their children off to a healthy start."

- **Emily Church**
Millfield, Ohio





"With the current benefit of \$25, I don't worry about my son's evolving tastes or if he doesn't like something new that I've bought for him. If the benefit was reduced to \$9, I wouldn't be able to introduce my son to new fruits and vegetables that he hadn't tried before. Many of the new foods that he's tried with this added benefit have become his favorites like berries and cherry tomatoes, and I'd like to encourage him to grow up with a healthy and varied diet.

**-Samantha Thompson
Fort Wayne, Indiana**



"The increased WIC fruit and vegetable benefit is hands down the most valuable and crucial part of WIC for my family. Between my always on-the-move baby, my 4 year old, and my appetite as a breastfeeding mom, we DEVOUR fresh fruits and veggies! However, they're also incredibly expensive! If we lose this benefit it would be a huge strain on our household budget, not to mention increase my stress level as a busy working parent."

**- Sarah Manasrah
Brooklyn, New York**



"The increased fruit and vegetable benefits in WIC have been great for a grandmother of three. WIC makes sure that all three kids get the amount of fruits and veggies that they need and love! **If this benefit was lowered, it would mean that my grandkids wouldn't get as much as what the doctors tell me they need.** The added benefit also helps me manage my household budget, especially with inflation and the cost of groceries overall."

**- Kempernie Sutton
Ridgeland, Mississippi**



"WIC helps provide enough fruits and vegetables to get my kids through most of the month, allowing me to spend my money on other foods, like quality meat for dinner. Lowering the fruit and veggie benefit would have a huge impact on my kids, especially since most of their snacks are fruits and vegetables."

**- Brittany Gibson
Boise, Idaho**



"Especially with higher food prices, my family would not be able to afford fresh fruits and vegetables without the increased WIC benefit. This monthly support has helped me shop for and incorporate new fruits and vegetables into my kids' diet. I would not be able to sustain this if the benefits were decreased."

**- Cristina Colunga
Elgin, Illinois**

