

The Child Care Nutrition Enhancement Act of 2025

U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal & Tina Smith U.S. Representative Greg Landsman (D-OH)

Healthy, nutritious meals are essential for all children, especially during their formative years. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) helps child care providers administer healthy meals and snacks to more than four million children enrolled in family child care homes, child care centers, Head Start programs, and after school programs. Studies have shown that children in CACFP receive meals that are nutritionally superior to those served to children in child care settings without CACFP participation. Despite the positive effects of CACFP, current reimbursement rates and outdated program policies leave child care providers with significant financial barriers while operating CACFP.

Even as the child care sector faces strains on multiple fronts, providers are withdrawing from CACFP due to inadequate reimbursement rates for the cost of food, fuel, and administrative requirements of the program. Participation rates among family child care providers have declined drastically as a result of CACFP's tiering structure, which applies varying reimbursement rates only to family child care providers depending on the local poverty level associated with the provider's residence. Family child care providers who qualify for Tier II reimbursements receive 40 to 73 percent less than the amount of Tier I rates. The gap between reimbursement rates and program compliance costs is becoming too wide for family child care providers to manage.

The Child Care Nutrition Enhancement Act seeks to enhance child nutrition and health, reduce hunger, and augment child development and educational readiness. Specifically, the Child Care Nutrition Enhancement Act would improve meal reimbursements provided by CACFP to help provide necessary stability to child care providers by:

- Increasing Meal Reimbursements by 10 Cents per Meal: Current reimbursement rates are too low and are not tied to rising food costs. This provision would provide a baseline reimbursement rate increase of 10 cents for each eligible meal and snack and adjust future reimbursement rates for changes in food costs.
- Eradicating the Tier Structure: This provision would eliminate CACFP's tiering structure and allow all family child care providers to receive the same reimbursement rate for meals and snacks, providing for a more even distribution of program benefits.
- Providing Reimbursement for Meals that Family Child Care Providers Issue to Their Own Children: This provision would allow family child care providers to serve reimbursable meals and snacks to their own children who are enrolled in the program when providing meals and snacks to other children in their care.



119th Cosponsors

This bill is cosponsored by U.S. Senators Tina Smith (D-MI), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and Peter Welch (D-VT), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and U.S. Representatives Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), and Andrea Salinas (D-OR)

119th Supporting Organizations

National Organizations

Advocates for Better Children's Diets, All Our Kin, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), American Heart Association, CACFP National Professional Association, CACFP Roundtable, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), Child Care Aware of America, Child Welfare League of America, Coalition on Human Needs, Community Change Action, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces, Early Care and Education Consortium, Early Learning Ventures, Family Values @ Work, First Children's Finance, First Five Years Fund, First Focus Campaign for Children, Food Research and Action Center, Home Grown, KinderCare Learning Companies, Main Street Alliance, National Adult Day Services Association, National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, National Association for Family Child Care, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National CACFP Association, National CACFP Forum, National Education Association, National Farm to School Network, National Head Start Association, National Indian Child Care Association, National Women's Law Center, ParentChild+, Partnership for a Healthier America, Save the Children, Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

State and Local Organizations

Arkansas

Arkansas Family Child Care Association Northwest Arkansas Family Child Care Association OPERATION KIDS White River Planning & Development District

California

4Cs Sonoma County

Bay Area Professional Family Child Care Network
Building Better Communities Foundation
California Child Care Resource and Referral Network
Child Development - Pomona Unified School District
CocoKids
Family Resource Center
FRAMAX

New Jersey

Advocates for Children of New Jersey New Jersey Association for the Education of Young Children

New York

Alliance for Quality Education Empire State Campaign for Child Care

Ohio

Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children Southwest Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children



Human Response Network Neighborhood House Association Options for Learning PEACH Thriving Families California

Colorado

Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children

Connecticut

Connecticut Voices for Children Hartford Family Child Care Educators Community

District of Columbia

DC Family Child Care Association

Florida

Florida Head Start Association

Georgia

Quality Care for Children

Maine

Family Child Care Association of Maine

Maryland

Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children Maryland Family Network Maryland State Family Child Care Association

Massachusetts

Clarendon Early Education Services

Montana

Montana Association for the Education of Young Children Montana Family Childcare Network

Oregon

Alliance for Equity in Montessori Education Children's Institute NeighborImpact Prevent Child Abuse Oregon

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children Pennsylvania Head Start Association Quality Influential Professionals (QIP) The Kimble Group, LLC

Tennessee

AWAKE Tennessee Chambliss Center for Children Nashville Area Association for the Education of Young Children Nashville Early Childhood Coalition Raphah Institute St. Mary Villa, Inc. The Urban Child Institute Youth Encouragement Services, Inc.

Texas

ADFW Family Child Care Network El Paso Human Services, Inc.

Utah

Utah Association for the Education of Young Children

Vermont

Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children

Virginia

Voices for Virginia's Children



Wisconsin

Green County Child Care Network Wisconsin Early Childhood Association Wisconsin Family Child Care Association