

September 17, 2020

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
U.S. House of Representatives
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Linda Sánchez
U.S. House of Representatives
2329 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jenniffer González-Colón
U.S. House of Representatives
1609 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kim Schrier
U.S. House of Representatives
1123 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert P. Casey
U.S. Senate
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
U.S. Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives DeLauro, Sánchez, González-Cólon, and Schrier and Senators Casey and Collins:

On behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan children's advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families the priority in federal policy and budget decisions, we are writing to express our thanks and support for the Wise Investment in Children (WIC) Act (H.R. 6811 | S. 2358).

For over 40 years, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) has been improving the nutrition and health of low-income mothers and babies, serving 7.2 million people in 2017.¹ Extensive research has shown that WIC improves birth outcomes, reduces infant mortality, supports better infant and young children feeding practices, and improves cognitive development and academic achievement.² Ensuring that young children have proper nutrition in utero and the first years of life is paramount. Proper nutrition has been called the “single greatest environmental influence on babies,” making WIC an extremely important program for low-income individuals.³

The Wise Investment in Children (WIC) Act will make the WIC program accessible to even more people by extending eligibility through the age of 6, extending the certification period for two years, and extending post-partum eligibility to two years for all mothers. Extending the age limit to 6 will ensure that no children face a gap in nutrition programs between WIC and the National School Lunch Program, which begins in kindergarten. Extending the certification period will make it easier on both WIC agencies and mothers, and extending post-partum eligibility will ensure that the WIC program will have a greater impact on nursing mothers and infants.

¹ <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic-2017-eligibility-and-coverage-rates>

² <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/wic-works-addressing-the-nutrition-and-health-needs-of-low-income-families>

³ <http://www.urbanchildinstitute.org/articles/updates/nutrition-and-early-brain-development>

The WIC Program already benefits so many, but it has potential to help even more women and children. The WIC Act will help to extend benefits for those already receiving it, and ensure that more young children are getting the proper nutrition they need to grow and thrive. We thank you for your leadership on behalf of children and families, and we look forward to working with you to help advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent underline under the word "Lesley".

Bruce Lesley
President