

Support the Access to Healthy Food for Young Children Act of 2015 (S.1833)

The Access to Healthy Food for Young Children Act of 2015, introduced by Senator Robert Casey (D-PA) on July 22, 2015, would strengthen the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) by improving the area eligibility test, allowing the option of a third meal service (typically a snack or supper), increasing CACFP reimbursements, enhancing administrative reimbursements for CACFP sponsors, providing two year implementation, nutrition, and wellness funds for state CACFP agencies and sponsors, continuing funding for USDA's CACFP nutrition and wellness education study, creating a "Provision 2" option for child care centers, providing a carry-over option for sponsors of centers and afterschool programs, streamlining program requirements, reducing paperwork, and maximizing technology to improve program access.

What is the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)?

CACFP provides nutritious meals and snacks to children and adults receiving child care at family child care homes, child care centers, Head Start programs, afterschool programs, and adult care centers. CACFP ensures that young children in child care receive a nutritious diet and learn good eating habits through nutrition education. CACFP has also been shown to improve the quality of care.

How Many Children Benefit from CACFP?

Currently 3.8 million children receive healthy meals and snacks daily from CACFP in family child care homes, child care centers, and afterschool programs.

What does the bill propose?

Improve the area eligibility test by allowing child care providers to receive the higher Tier I reimbursement if 40 percent of the children in the neighborhood are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

Allow the option of a third meal service to serve children who are in care for more than eight hours per day.

Increase CACFP reimbursements for child care centers, family child care providers, and afterschool programs by 10 cents per child per meal per tier to stem participation declines and improve nutrition. Increasing the availability and consumption of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lower-fat dairy products among young children in child care is absolutely essential to improve development, health, and prevent obesity.

Enhance administrative reimbursements to support CACFP sponsoring organizations by \$5 per family child care home per month to support the implementation the new healthier CACFP meal pattern and to sustain the participation of family childcare providers.

Provide two year implementation funds (\$50 million per year) for state CACFP agencies and \$10 million for USDA, to implement the new healthier CACFP meal pattern and support CACFP participation.

Continue funding for USDA's CACFP nutrition and wellness education study, authorized in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Create a "Provision 2" streamlining option for CACFP to allow centers serving predominantly low-income children to use a blended rate to offer free meals to all children in their care, without collecting additional paperwork, for four years.

Provide a carry-over option for organizations sponsoring child care centers and afterschool programs in CACFP.

Authorize a Congressionally-mandated USDA CACFP paperwork reduction initiative including a focus on maximizing the effective use of technology.

Streamline requirements, reduce paperwork, and maximize technology to improve program access.

Learn more about this legislation and actions you can take to ensure these provisions are a part of the final child nutrition bill later this year: <http://frac.org/leg-act-center/>