

## Support the Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act of 2015 (H.R. 3886)

The Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act of 2015 (H.R. 3886), introduced by Representative Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) and Representative Elise Stefanik (R-NY) in November 2015, would ensure more children get the healthy start they deserve. The bill would strengthen the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) by allowing an additional healthy meal or snack for children in care for a full day, maximizing technology and innovation to reduce parent, provider and sponsor paperwork, streamlining program operations by reducing for-profit child care center eligibility determinations from monthly to biannually, and authorizing a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) review and new guidelines to assure a fair and reasonable compliance and appeals process.

### How Many Children Benefit from CACFP?

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

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

CACFP provides nutritious meals and snacks to children and adults receiving care at family child care homes, child care centers, Head Start programs, afterschool programs, homeless shelters, and nonresidential adult day 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.

### What does the bill propose?

- Allows the option of a third meal service (typically a meal or a snack) to serve children who are in care for more than eight hours per day.
- Simplifies eligibility for proprietary (for-profit) centers by permitting centers to certify eligibility every six months instead of every month. Many are small “Mom and Pop” child care centers and afterschool programs providing much needed care to low-income children in underserved areas. The current requirement to certify eligibility each month is an unnecessary program burden.
- Reduces paperwork for parents, providers and sponsors by directing USDA to maximize the use of technology and innovation, and eliminate unnecessary and duplicative Federal and state regulatory requirements. Mandates an expert advisory committee to support USDA in their ongoing efforts to cut the red tape in the program.
- Mandates USDA review the CACFP serious deficiency process and issue guidance and, as appropriate regulations, establishing appeal rights for a finding of serious deficiency or a determination that a corrective action plan is inadequate, allowing family child care providers enough time to take corrective action (90 days) and offering clarity on the different measures of noncompliance to reduce the number of providers who are sanctioned for unintentional program violations. In addition, the USDA review will cover a comprehensive list of key areas including mediation of State-specific requirements and guaranteeing appeals officials are fair and impartial.

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/>