

FULL FUNDING AND MODERNIZATION FOR SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

POSITION STATEMENT

The 21 Member Tribes of the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona (ITAA) urge Congress to fully fund WIC for FY2027 and continue WIC modernization by supporting the MODERN WIC Act (H.R. 1464) & 21st Century WIC Act (S. 3842). These efforts provide the resources to serve every eligible person who seeks benefits to safeguard WIC's longstanding public health success and give our nation's children a healthy start in life.

KEY POINTS

-  **Fully fund WIC** to provide healthy food and breastfeeding resources for projected caseloads.
-  **Ensure WIC is protected** during future government shutdowns and emergencies by supporting the WIC contingency fund. Provide sufficient resources to support WIC operations for approximately one month and increase WIC's spendforward authority to 10 percent.
-  **Invest in set-asides** to support the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program, updates to WIC infrastructure and Management Information Systems, and program evaluation.



BACKGROUND

For nearly 30 years, Congress has provided WIC with the resources to serve every eligible individual who seeks WIC certification, "fully funding" WIC. It is critical that lawmakers uphold this commitment. WIC is the nation's premier public health nutrition program serving 6.8 million mothers and young children including more than 10,000 American Indians in Arizona. WIC more than doubles its return on investment, saving \$2.48 in healthcare costs for every dollar spent on WIC services. WIC is funded under Agricultural Appropriations and authorized under the Child Nutrition Act and Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act.

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Key Points

- Fully fund WIC to provide healthy food and breastfeeding resources for projected caseloads, ensuring that every eligible person can receive benefits, including the full fruit and vegetable benefit.
- Modernize the WIC physical presence requirement and allow permanent hybrid services to improve efficiencies and flexibility in access to services. Current approval to provide remote services expires on September 30, 2026.
- Ensure WIC is protected during future government shutdowns and emergencies by supporting the WIC contingency fund that was crucial to supporting temporary program operations during the fall 2025 government shutdown. Congress should provide sufficient resources to support WIC operations for approximately one month and increase WIC's spendforward authority to 10 percent to improve State Agencies' ability to make multi-year financial plans.
- Invest in set-asides to support the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program, updates to WIC infrastructure and Management Information Systems, and program evaluation.
- Ensure that WIC data is protected and not shared for non-program purposes.
- Support efforts to modernize the program through support of the expansion of the online shopping pilot projects and finalize rule-making for online shopping.

Background

For nearly 30 years, Congress has provided WIC with the resources to serve every eligible individual who seeks WIC certification, "fully funding" WIC through the appropriations process on a bipartisan basis. It is critical that lawmakers uphold this commitment in the coming fiscal years in order to protect participant trust and safeguard WIC's longstanding public health success. WIC is the nation's premier public health nutrition program serving 6.8 million mothers and young children including more than 10,000 American Indians in Arizona. WIC more than doubles its return on investment, saving \$2.48 in healthcare costs for every dollar spent on WIC services. WIC is funded under Agricultural Appropriations and authorized under the Child Nutrition Act and Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act.