

FRAC Advocate January 2023

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On the Hill

The 118th Congress is now in full swing. The Senate Agriculture Committee will hold its first Farm Bill hearing February 1 and also plans to have U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack testify before a panel on March 16. Programs in the current Farm Bill begin to expire September 30. Urge your Members of Congress to protect and strengthen the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the 2023 Farm Bill. There is increasing concern that federal food assistance for millions of people in America is at risk amid the brewing debt limit fight in Washington. FRAC and other advocates urge Members of Congress to raise the debt limit and not entertain appropriations decisions as part of this routine process. Under no circumstance should federal nutrition programs be cut.

Request for Subgrant Applications to Conduct Innovative Outreach in WIC to Increase Program Participation

FRAC, the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition, the Native American Agriculture Fund, and UnidosUS have announced a [Request for Applications](#) for subgrants for their WIC Community Innovation and Outreach Project (WIC CIAO). A total of up to \$10 million will be awarded in this initial round of funding to help WIC state and local agencies, Indian Tribal Organizations, and nonprofit entities and organizations, develop, implement, and evaluate innovative outreach strategies to increase WIC awareness, participation, benefit redemption, and reduce disparities in program delivery. [Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. EST on March 23, 2023.](#)

Meals Matter

Anti-hunger advocate Velle Perkins recently spoke with a *Washington Post* columnist, noting, "Hunger is one of the most crippling, unfortunate and devastating feelings in the world. When they're cutting benefits, they're also cutting families. We're going to feel it — mentally, emotionally, financially." The [piece](#) calls attention to the importance of free healthy school meals for all and SNAP. "Households have been struggling," Luis Guardia, president of the Food Research and Action Center, said. "We can't just pull the rug out from under them."

Concerns Over School Meal Participation

In an [interview](#) with *The New York Times*, FRAC's Crystal FitzSimons discussed how the elimination of child nutrition waivers has led to fewer children receiving school breakfast and lunch, creating challenges for families and schools. "That can create a vicious cycle in which lower participation translates to higher costs per meal, forcing schools to raise the price of a meal and squeezing out even more families."

FRAC Honors Life and Legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

FRAC President Luis Guardia noted in a [statement](#) that this year marks the 60th anniversary of Dr. King's exalted "I Have a Dream" speech that was delivered on August 28, 1963, during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. A quarter of a million people rallied in Washington, D.C., calling for the eradication of segregation; fair wages; voting rights; access to education; and long-awaited civil rights laws. The march underscored the urgent action needed to address the profound harms of institutional and systemic racism.

Emergency Allotments to Sunset

Premature cuts to SNAP Emergency Allotments are expected to hasten the hunger cliff for millions of people with low incomes as soon as March 2023, with the steepest cliff occurring for older adults. FRAC's Ellen Vollinger [spoke](#) with Food Tank about the 2023 Omnibus Appropriations Bill and why reducing SNAP benefits would hurt families with low incomes. "It's expected that the loss of Emergency Allotments (EAs) will cost about US\$82 a SNAP participant a month. [Emergency Allotments were] designed to be for the duration of the pandemic health declaration."

Decreases in Eligible Immigrants' SNAP Participation Show There's More Work to be Done

FRAC's Alex Ashbrook and Susan Beaudoin review key SNAP participation data trends and lift the importance of the new Biden administration public charge rule as a critical step in helping to reverse SNAP participation decreases among eligible immigrant households.

The Power of Students' Voices in the Healthy School Meals for All Campaign

In this guest FRAC Chat blog, Kristie To, a high school student who has been a leader in California's school meals for all campaign, shares her advice on how youth can effectively use their voice and get involved in free school meals for all campaigns across the country.

Maine's Path to Healthy School Meals for All

Full Plates Full Potential played a key role in advancing landmark legislation in Maine that guarantees free healthy school meals for all students. Learn more about their work leading up to this critical milestone.

GET VOCAL ON SOCIAL

Click to Tweet:

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY from @fractweets, @WeAreUnidosUS, @NativeAgFund, & @GretchenSwanson: Raise awareness & expand #WIC outreach in your community. Apply for the #WIC Community Innovation & Outreach subgrant, supported by @USDANutrition, by 3/23. <https://frac.org/wic-ciao/rfa>

Save the date for the first-ever hybrid National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference from May 7-9! Join @fractweets, @hunger, and thousands of advocates from all across the country to network, attend thought-provoking workshops, and exchange best practices. #Hungerpc23 Momentum is building! I'm raising my hand with @fractweets, students, parents, teachers, doctors, policymakers, and many others in support of #SchoolMeals4All so every child has the nutrition they need to learn and thrive. Join me! <http://www.freeschoolmealsforall.org/>

Coming Soon ...

February: Black History Month

February 18–26: Congressional Recess

February 20: Presidents' Day

[FRAC 2023 Editorial Calendar](#)

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