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WIC FUNDING CRISIS: URGENT ACTION NEEDED

If Congress does not provide sufficient funding for the WIC program before they go home for the December holidays, more than 56,000 low-income mothers and young children may be cut from the WIC program in Texas. Congress is developing an omnibus appropriations bill that would represent a compromise between the lower amount of spending requested by the President and the higher level approved by Congress for various programs. WIC is one of the programs that would be cut under this compromise.

Action Needed

Please call your Senators and Representatives in their Washington, D.C. offices immediately. Call the main capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for your member's office. Ask to speak with the legislative assistant who handles nutrition programs. **Calls must be made by Thursday, December 6, to make a difference.**

- **Message:** We understand that Congress is developing an omnibus appropriations bill that splits the difference with the President's proposed funding level. We are extremely concerned that adequate funding be provided for the WIC program. WIC has a proven track record of contributing to healthier births and improving the diets of pregnant women, infants, and young children. We urge you to provide \$5.96 billion for WIC to ensure that no eligible applicants are turned away. We also urge you to fund WIC without cutting other critical low-income programs more deeply.

Given the rising cost of food (especially milk and cheese) and increase in need for WIC services, the original funding levels proposed for WIC would result in more than half a million women and young children being denied WIC benefits nationwide. Congress is now working on an "omnibus" bill that would split the difference between the lower funding level requested by the President (\$5.3 billion) and the higher levels approved by Congress (\$5.6 billion in the House and \$5.7 billion in the Senate.) Based on WIC participation trends and the current economic outlook, it is estimated that a funding level of \$5.96 billion is needed for fiscal year 2008.

To learn more, sign up for e-mails, or make a donation, go to www.cphp.org.

The Center for Public Policy Priorities is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization committed to improving public policies to better the economic and social conditions of low- and moderate-income Texans.