



School Nutrition Association of Wisconsin

State Government Affairs Report (June 2013)

OVERVIEW:

The State Legislature finished its work on the \$70 billion state budget bill in June. The newly enacted legislation, signed into law by Gov. Scott Walker on June 30, outlines the state's spending plan for the next two years and impacts a number of nutrition and wellness issues that may be of interest to SNA-WI members.

During the state budget process, which began back in February, the SNA-WI Government Affairs Team has been hard at work to achieve two critical legislative goals: 1.) To ensure no funding reductions were made to state school nutrition programs (breakfast or lunch); and 2.) Provide access to and new funding for school breakfast programs. More specifically, SNA-WI was working to provide state School Breakfast reimbursement funding for Wisconsin's independent charter schools – the only schools in Wisconsin that do not currently receive the reimbursement.

Unfortunately, SNA-WI's budget initiative (providing school breakfast reimbursement funding for the state's independent charter schools) was not included in the final version of the budget passed and signed into law. While the SNA-WI Government Affairs Team found support from several key legislators – including members of the Legislature's powerful budget-writing committee – the Republican-controlled leadership ultimately decided to focus limited state resources on their other priorities, including a billion tax cut and additional funding for K-12 education.

However, it's important to point out the SNA-WI School Breakfast funding initiative still has a chance to be signed into law during the second half of the legislation session. During the budget process, nearly all of the policy items originally proposed by Gov. Scott Walker relating to independent charter schools were removed from the budget bill. As a result, these provisions will likely be introduced as separate legislation. The SNA-WI Government Affairs Team will attempt to include the Association's School Breakfast proposal as part of the forthcoming legislation. Stay tuned....

PLEASE FIND BELOW THE JUNE 2013 SNA-WI STATE GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS REPORT:

Legislative Activity:

- **State Budget Bill “Wrap-Up”** – Despite the disappointment over the Association's School Breakfast funding proposal not passing as part of the budget, the bill did include some other items of interest to SNA-WI, including:

School Nutrition-related budget provisions:

- No budget cuts were made to the state's School Breakfast or School Lunch reimbursement funding programs – which was critical given the growing demand for these programs across Wisconsin. Reimbursement funding for these critical programs have been cut in the last several state budgets. While it's disappointing that funding was not increased, avoiding a funding cut was a step in the right direction.

Other Nutrition-related budget provisions:

- Provides \$433,300 in one-time state funding for senior citizen nutrition programs. The purpose of the state funding is to reduce the impact of federal funding cuts to Older American Act (OAA) programs. The OAA provides federal funding to Wisconsin counties and tribes to

support nutrition services for senior citizens, including congregate meals, home-delivered meals ("meals on wheels"), and other supportive services.

- Prohibits a county or municipality from enacting an ordinance or adopting a resolution that prohibits or restricts the sale of food or nonalcoholic beverages based on the number of calories, portion size, or other nutritional criteria of the food or nonalcoholic beverage. This provision **does not** impact school nutrition programs.
- Provides \$190,000 over the biennium to continue work on the state employee wellness program. The wellness program is a multi-year initiative to improve the overall health status of state employees, with a focus on both prevention and improved health care management for those with chronic conditions. The program is also intended to help reduce the overall costs the providing health care coverage to state employees.
- Authorizes the state to reduce or terminate FoodShare (SNAP) benefits for able-bodied adults without dependents, if the recipient does not: 1.) Work an average of 20 hours per week; 2.) Participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for 20 hours per week; 3.) Spend 20 hours per week in any combination of work and participation in a work program; or 4.) Participate in and comply with a workfare program.